N 2729

THE PAVILION.

A NOVEL.

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NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

AT THE

Minerva-Press,

LEADENHALL-STREET.

M.DCC.XC.VI.

THE

PAVILION.

CHAP. I.

Containing events which muſt be unexpected by, though, we hope, not unacceptable to, the Reader.

ALMOST ſinking under the weight of her misfortunes, ſhe was conveyed to priſon. When ſhe arrived, her appearance was ſo uncommon, and ſhe ſeemed ſo extremely ill, that the jailor's wife, who happened to ſee her, and was of a compaſſionate diſpoſition, felt diſpoſed to ſhew her kindneſs.

The extreme diſtreſs of poor Ethelinda, almoſt deprived her of the power of ſpeech.

"Be comforted, young woman," cried the jailor's wife; "come, perhaps things may turn out better than you expect."

"Oh!" ſaid Ethelinda, "what will become of me; innocent as I am of the offence that I am accuſed of, yet appearances are ſo much againſt me, that I muſt ſink under them;—for at this moment, I am ſo terrified, ſo bewildered, that I know not what ſtep to take: But, for mercy's ſake, do not let me go into a common priſon, among the wretched creatures that muſt neceſſarily be there."

There was ſomething in Ethelinda that intereſted the jailor's wife more and more in her favour.

"Well," ſaid ſhe, "you ſhall remain here 'till my huſband comes home, and we then will ſee what can be done for you."

Ethelinda

Ethelinda was, in ſome meaſure, ſoothed by the woman's kindneſs; but dreaded, leſt the feelings of her huſband, when he returned, ſhould prove leſs compaſſionate. In a few minutes, the door opened.

"Oh! here is my huſband," cried the woman.

Ethelinda immediately recognized a face that ſhe had ſeen before, though ſhe could not recollect where; but the man inſtantainouſly exclaimed, "Good Heavens! don't I ſee the dear young lady, to whom I owe my life, and every comfort of it.—Yes, yes, it is ſo."

Ethelinda immediately brought to mind the poor man whom ſhe had ſo humanely relieved, juſt before the death of Lady Falkner.

"You are not miſtaken," cried ſhe; "I am the perſon who was ſo happy as to be of ſome uſe to you, and I now ſtand in the greateſt need of your mercy."

"My mercy! my mercy!" exclaimed the jailor: "Is it poſſible it can be in my poor power to ſerve you? Every penny I have in the world I owe to you; every thing, therefore, I have in the world, is at your ſervice. Patty, down on your knees, for this is the angel lady, whoſe goodneſs ſaved me, and you, and all our children."

The poor woman, without any heſitation, did exactly as ſhe was bid, and fell on her knees before Ethelinda.

"Oh!" cried ſhe, "my dear young lady, how happy I ſhall be, if it is in my power, or Stephen's, to do you any good—to return ſome of your kindneſs, which has ſaved me and mine.—Oh! Stephen! they have brought this dear lady to priſon; I thought ſhe was innocent, by her looks, before I knew who ſhe was."

"Innocent," cried the jailor; "curſe them, who dare to ſay otherwiſe: But tell me, dear Miſs, how you came here."

"If you will ſit down," replied Ethelinda, "I will immediately acquaint you with every circumſtance, as far as I know."

"I cannot ſit down in your preſence," anſwered the jailor;—"whatever Patty does."

"Nor I neither," cried Patty, jumping up—for ſhe had ſeated herſelf.

"But I inſiſt upon it, that you both do," anſwered Ethelinda; "and if you will ſuffer me to remain, for the preſent, with you, you will oblige me very much."

"Suffer you to remain with us! ſuffer you to remain with us!" cried the jailor; "it is too great an honour for us: But tell me how all this comes about?"

Ethelinda, having at laſt prevailed upon them to be ſeated, related as much of her hiſtory as was neceſſary, to let Mr. Jackſon into her preſent ſituation.—When ſhe had done, he exclaimed, "Damned plot—it will all come out; it muſt all come out;—cheer up, young lady, and condeſcend to ſhare what we have, for the preſent."

When the mind is oppreſſed, ſo as to overſhadow every ray of hope, any unexpected relief brings with it more than it's proportion of comfort; ſo it was with Ethelinda; almoſt driven to deſpair, ſhe found, in the grateful Jackſon, an elevating relief;—tho' her proſpects were gloomy, ſhe had met with a friend, and ſhe ceaſed to deſpair.

Jackſon told his wife to get ſomething hot for ſupper.

"Dear Miſs," continued he, "tell us what you can eat.—Is there any thing you can fancy?"

Ethelinda, charmed with theſe proofs of his grateful heart, thanked him in the warmeſt manner; but aſſured him, that a piece of bread was all ſhe could eat.

"Well, then," ſaid he, "you will not refuſe drinking a glaſs of punch, I hope: I am ſure ſomething warm will do you good:—Curſe thoſe that would do you any harm:—

But,

But, truſt me, right will come right at laſt, and you will triumph over your perſecutors."

Ethelinda, ſeeing it would mortify him to refuſe his glaſs of punch, told him ſhe would accept of it; but as ſhe was very much haraſſed and fatigued, wiſhed to retire ſoon. Mrs. Jackſon ſaid, that, if ſhe pleaſed, ſhe ſhould ſleep in a room next their's, which ſhe could ſay was a very comfortable one. Ethelinda gladly accepted her offer, and when ſhe had drunk a couple of glaſſes of the honeſt jailor's punch, ſhe retired to her apartment, where ſhe found much more repoſe than could have been expected. The next day, ſhe conſulted with Jackſon what ſtep ſhe ought to take.—Bail for her was neceſſary.—She ſent to Miſs Elford; but all the family were in the country.—She then ſent to Mr. Sandford, but he was not in town, nor expected there for ſome time.—She ſent a letter to Mr. Hales, but he was not returned from the country—but ſhe begged the letter might be forwarded to him, with very little hope, however, of receiving

any relief, as the diſtance between them was ſo great, and ſhe ſeemed to ſtand in need of immediate aſſiſtance. Nothing could be more gloomy than her ſituation and conſequent reflections; in the confines of a priſon, and not able to find a friend to afford her ſuccour. Though innocent of the offence with which ſhe was charged, ſhe had not the means of making that innocence appear. Conſcious that ſo degrading a circumſtance would be, for the preſent at leaſt, a prevention to her even getting her livelihood, ſhe thought of Mrs. Fletcher; but what could ſhe do for her; to acquaint her, therefore, with the preſent event, would only be involving her in diſtreſs to anſwer no purpoſe.—She had written repeatedly to Mr. Hall, but ſhe had not heard from him a great while, and was doubtful whether to attribute it to her frequent change of place, or to any accident that had befallen him.—She often thought of him with the moſt tender anxiety, and could not help now exclaiming, "Dear, and much-lamented friend, who was a father to me, if you be yet alive,

alive, how would your kind heart be rent, to know of my ſufferings.—If you are in a happier world, perhaps, at this moment, your ſpirit hovers over Ethelinda, once ſo highly indulged, though an unknown orphan."

Mrs. Jackſon came in, and found her in an agony of tears.

"Do not, my dear young lady," ſaid the poor woman, "give way to ſorrow.—Oh! if you ſaw ſuch ſcenes as I ſometimes do, your heart would almoſt break; but you would find how many there are in a much worſe ſituation. I am ſure, uſed as I am to ſee poor objects, there is now a wretched family here, that I heartily wiſh I could relieve: But if I were to do thoſe things whenever I wiſh it, I ſhould ſoon not have a penny left myſelf."

Ethelinda, who never ſuffered ſelfiſh conſiderations to render her inſenſible to the woes of her fellow-creatures, immediately

aſked Mrs. Jackſon who the people were, that ſhe alluded to?

"I don't know who they are," ſaid Mr. Jackſon; "but I yeſterday morning was witneſs to the moſt affecting ſcene I ever beheld.—It is for a very ſmall ſum the old man is confined; but perhaps it will not diſpleaſe you to look upon them; you will there ſee—forgive me, dear lady, that there are others more miſerable than you."

"I will go," replied Ethelinda; "tho' I cannot help myſelf, I may be of ſome little uſe to them."

"I am ſure," ſaid Mrs. Jackſon, "that, had I not helped them a little, the poor man, who is very ill, would have been dead before this time."

"Let us go to them," cried Ethelinda.

Mrs. Jackſon led the way into a gloomy room, with one ſmall window that was grated with thick iron bars: An ill looking man ſat there, whom ſhe aſked for the keys.

"You

"You had better," ſaid he, "let me go with you to open the door.—I ſuppoſe you are going to viſit the old man; he isn't long for this world, I believe."

Mrs. Jackſon agreed, that he had better go with them, and open the doors. They followed him through ſeveral dark paſſages, 'till they came to a large door caſed over with iron. The door creaked on it's hinges, and admitted them into a broad paſſage, in which were ſeveral ſmall doors on each ſide. As they paſſed along, they heard a deep groan.—Ethelinda ſtarted, and looked round, with horror, at the combined ideas of the wretchedneſs ſhe was witneſs to, and the feeling that, but for the kindneſs of the jailor, ſhe muſt herſelf have been an inmate of one of theſe cells of woe. They preſently ſtopped at one of the doors, and, upon it's being opened, ſhe ſaw, by a glimmering light, an old man extended on a heap of ſtraw, in one corner of the room; kneeling, and half reclining over him, with one of his hands in her's, her head ſinking upon it,

and preſſing it to her lips, was a young woman, in the garb of a Magdalen.—Behind her, ſat on a little ſtool, an old woman (whoſe aſpect commanded veneration) with her hands put together in a ſtate of ſilent ſupplication.—Upon the opening of the door, ſhe looked up, but ſpoke not, 'till Mrs. Jackſon aſked her how her huſband did.

"He is alive," ſaid ſhe; "but I fear I ſhall not have that to ſay long; for, except the bit of bread and the drop of wine you kindly gave him yeſterday, he has not taſted food theſe two days, and ſeems nearly ſpent; but our child is found! Oh! ſhe is found."

The young woman, who had never moved from the poſition ſhe was in, now lifted up her head—but, looking in the old man's face, who lay with his eyes cloſed, yet tears falling from them, ſhe uttered, with a kind of wildneſs in her manner, "wretch that I am," and ſunk again upon his hand.

Mrs.

Mrs. Jackſon ſaid, ſhe thought he wanted ſomething to ſupport him, and was agitated by the preſence of his daughter, which, in his reduced ſtate, was too much for him.

" So it is," cried the young woman, riſing quickly ; " I kill him all ways—wretch that I am."

" Oh ! Madam," continued ſhe, turning to Mrs. Jackſon, " for pity's ſake, immediately give him ſome nouriſhment."—In turning to Mrs. Jackſon, ſhe had a glance of Ethelinda, and giving a ſcream, caught hold of Mrs. Jackſon's gown.—" It is Miſs Claremont," cried ſhe ; " yes, it is her."

" Is it poſſible !" cried the old woman.

Ethelinda, in a few moments, recognized the Benwells, and diſcovered, in the poor Magdalen, the formerly innocent, and beautiful Nancy. A thouſand ideas of paſt times ruſhed into her mind, and almoſt deprived her of the power of ſpeaking ;—but very ſoon recollecting herſelf, ſhe inquired how they came into that place.

" Oh !

Oh! Madam," replied the poor Magdalen, " I am the unhappy cauſe; it is all owing to my crimes."

" Whatever they have been," replied Ethelinda, " you now ſeem ſo properly conſcious, and repentant of them, that I hope they will be forgiven."

But it will be neceſſary to carry our reader's memory back to the time when the unfortunate Nancy determined, at the inſtigation of Mr. Corbet, to leave her father and mother, and go to ſervice in London. They were, at firſt, very unwilling to part with her;—but, finding that neither ſhe nor they would have any peace unleſs ſhe were ſuffered to go, they at laſt gave a reluctant conſent. When ſhe arrived in town, the truſty Duval met, and conducted her to a lodging, which he had provided.

Mr. Corbet, upon his leaving Newton Hall, previous to the death of Lady Falkner, went to London. His paſſion for Nancy had very ſoon begun to cool. She was a very

very pretty girl, and as ſuch, had attracted his notice.—But men, uſed to the ſociety of women, whoſe minds are cultivated, and manners refined, very ſeldom have a laſting attachment to one who is entirely deficient in thoſe qualities.—They cannot long be pleaſed with ignorance and vulgarity, which, after the firſt heat of their paſſion is over, will be continually offending, and ſoon create indifference and diſguſt.—So it was with Mr. Corbet.

The death of Lady Falkner put an end to his difficulties relative to Nancy.—He had now no one to dread; he wiſhed to get rid of her; and, to facilitate his deſigns, after having treated her in a moſt unmanly and cruel manner, he introduced to her one of his friends, who, he knew, admired her:—She, having been deeply grieved, and piqued by his indifference and ill uſage, liſtened to overtures from this gentleman. Mr. Corbet, having now a plea for quarrelling, gave her a trifling ſum of money, and left her. Almoſt driven to deſpair, and not knowing what to

do, ſhe yielded more to neceſſity than inclination, and went to live with the abovementioned gentleman. From him ſhe ſoon went to a third; and at laſt, having loſt her health, and been reduced to the neceſſity of begging for the ſupport of her wretched life, ſhe crept to the gates of the Magdalen, and, as ſome of the governors of that excellent charity were entering, ſhe fell proſtrate before them, and could only articulate, "Save me."—Theſe gentlemen, whoſe deeds of humanity will be recorded, where they will doubtleſs meet with a juſt reward, raiſed the poor fallen wretch, and ſupported her into the houſe. The miſery of her appearance made the ordinary courſe of application for admittance unneceſſary; and ſhe was immediately admitted to partake of a charity that does honour to every one who contributes to it's ſupport. How many does it ſave from going to the grave, ere reflection has brought them to a proper contrition for their offences! To what numbers does it give a chance of that repentance, which, we are told, will find acceptance! How many

does

does it reſtore to their friends, to virtue, and happineſs! And who will be daring enough to affirm, that ſuch an aſylum ought not to be afforded to theſe wretched creatures!—An aſylum, where wiſdom and religion ſupport the ſhield of benevolence—and where juſtice allows mercy to counterpoiſe her ſcales. Hail! bleſſed inſtitution—founded by the wiſeſt, and patronized by the beſt.—May you continue to flouriſh an example of true humanity, wiſdom, and virtue.

Nancy ſoon experienced not only a reverſe of ſituation, but a real change of ſentiment; her virtue had been a ſacrifice to weakneſs more than to vice. Mr. Corbet had undermined her principles; ſhe loved him, and ſhe became the victim of his art. She had long repented of her folly, though perhaps her repentance had at firſt ariſen more from what ſhe ſuffered, than from a more laudable motive: But in that aſylum, ſhe was led to reflection; her faults judiciouſly repreſented; the ſource of them inveſtigated, and the conſequences

ſequences of them painted in ſuch lively colours, as muſt ſtrike the imagination, and touch the heart.—Her mind received the well-timed conviction, and emerged from the cloud that had overſhadowed it: All her wiſhes were ſoon centered in a hearty deſire of atoning, as far as ſhe was able, for her paſt miſconduct; and the moſt earneſt wiſh of her heart was, to diſcover her father and mother, who, ſhe had heard, were come to London. She got this intelligence from a young woman, who formerly lived in the ſame village with her, but went to ſervice in London.—Being very pretty, and very ignorant, ſhe ſoon fell a victim to the arts, not of a young man, but to thoſe of an old woman, and by degrees became an object for the compaſſion of that moſt compaſſionate inſtitution, where ſhe had met Nancy Benwell. They became friends; and this young woman, quitting the houſe, ſhe accidentally found out the old Benwells. She came to the Magdalen, and told Nancy, that ſhe had heard of her father and mother, but did not at firſt mention their ſituation.

The

The poor girl received the information with the greateſt emotion; and when, by degrees, ſhe learnt the particulars of their diſtreſs, her's was beyond deſcription. Almoſt frantic, ſhe flew to the matron, whoſe kindneſs ſhe had often experienced, and beſought her leave to go inſtantly to them. No arguments could prevail upon her to defer going, 'till they were appriſed of her intention. Half wild, ſhe ſet out in a hackney coach with her friend, for the priſon, and arrived there about an hour before Mrs. Jackſon and Ethelinda ſaw her; but ſo great was her agitation, when ſhe got within the doors of the priſon, that ſhe was, with difficulty, kept from fainting; and when ſhe found herſelf ſo near her parents, ſhe began to dread the interview ſhe had ſo long and ſo ardently wiſhed for, and was eaſily prevailed upon to let her friend inform them of her being there. When the young woman mentioned their daughter, they both burſt into tears; but, upon being told ſhe was there, and ſolicited to ſee them, the old man uttered a groan, and fell ſenſeleſs on his ſtraw bed: His ſituation

ation ſeemed now entirely to abſorb the attention of his wife.—The young woman ran out of the room, to call for help, and meeting Nancy, could not ſo ſufficiently conceal the diſtreſs ſhe had been witneſs to, as to prevent her from immediately ruſhing into the room. She had ſcarcely got within the door, before ſhe fell upon her knees.—Her father was ſenſeleſs, but her mother, in an agony of tears, fell upon her neck: It was ſome time before either could ſpeak—but at laſt Nancy ſobbed out, "Oh! my dear father! my mother! forgive! forgive!"

"My unhappy child," cried Mrs. Benwell, "I do forgive you, if, by your penitence, you deſerve forgiveneſs."

"I do, I do" exclaimed Nancy: "But oh! my father; will he not ſpeak to his wretched child?"

"Alas! he cannot," replied Mrs. Benwell.—"In wretchedneſs extreme, and almoſt without ſuſtenance, I fear he is ſo reduced that he is loſt."

"Oh!

"Oh! no—no," cried Nancy, and riſing from her poſture, threw herſelf by the ſide of the ſtraw he was laid upon.

"Go," cried ſhe, "if you have any pity, and ſeek for ſomething to give him."

Her friend obeyed; and while ſhe was gone, Mrs. Jackſon and Ethelinda came in.

Poor Benwell, though he had in ſome degree recovered, was unable to ſpeak; nor did he yet diſcover any ſign of ſenſe, but by the tears trickling down his cheeks.

"Oh! my poor father, Madam! my poor father," exclaimed the Magdalen.

"He will be better preſently," ſaid Ethelinda, and ſhe applied to him ſome Eau-deluce, which ſhe had in her pocket:—It had the deſired effect; and he faintly ſaid, "my child—Nancy, Nancy."

"He is recovering," ſaid Mrs. Jackſon; "I will try to raiſe him up a little."

"And I will haſten to get him ſomething," cried Ethelinda.

She

She accordingly went for that purpoſe to Mrs. Jackſon's room, where ſhe found a cordial. In returning with it through a room, where people wait, who have any buſineſs with the priſoners, ſhe was ſtruck with the appearance of a gentleman, whoſe back was towards her: He turned round, and ſhe inſtantly recognized Lord Beaufort. He ſtarted ſeveral paces back; and ſhe, hardly knowing what ſhe did, proceeded with the medicine to Benwell's apartment, but had ſcarcely given it to Mrs. Jackſon, before ſhe ſunk down almoſt ſenſeleſs. Every one preſent attributed it to the diſmal ſcene ſhe was witneſſing. Mrs. Jackſon urged her not to ſtay there any longer. Ethelinda's mind was now almoſt a chaos, and it was ſometime before ſhe could, in any degree, recollect herſelf. During this time, the poor old man, having had ſome of the cordial poured down his throat by Nancy, ſhewed evident ſigns of recovering, and began to give that vent to his feelings, which, in ſome degree, leſſened their poignancy. Ethelinda was preſently abſorbed in thought. That ſhe had ſeen Lord

Lord Beaufort, was certain; but for what he came there, what his buſineſs could be, perplexed her extremely; and that he ſhould ſee her in ſuch a place, ſhocked her beyond expreſſion. She blamed herſelf for not explaining her ſituation to him, and requeſting his advice; but then ſhe recollected his having paſſed her, when ſhe firſt came to town, in that unaccountable manner; but from him ſhe might have heard of Miſs Lyttleton, and ſhe would not have ſcrupled putting her offered kindneſs to the teſt, ſo far as to aſk her aſſiſtance in extricating her from the dreadful ſituation and diſgrace ſhe was at preſent under; and ſhe thought ſhe could depend upon Miſs Lyttleton, for not diſcovering her to Mr. Corbet.—Her thoughts were ſo entirely engroſſed by theſe ſubjects, that ſhe was loſt to every other, and ſat with her eyes fixed on the ground, 'till ſhe was rouſed by Mrs. Jackſon's begging her to take ſome of the cordial. Immediately recollecting herſelf, ſhe turned to the old man, and inquired if he continued better.

"Oh!

"Oh! yes," cried Nancy, ſobbing, as ſhe ſpoke; "my beloved father is better; he will live; he will forgive me; he will ſuffer me to be the ſupport of his age; and I can work; I can ſupport both him and my mother."

"I rejoice," cried Ethelinda, "at his amendment, and at your ſenſe of duty; and, as far as it is in my power, it will give me the ſincereſt pleaſure to aſſiſt you. I wiſh I had more ability—but, for the preſent, accept of this; and pulling out her purſe, ſhe gave them a guinea, ſaying, ſhe would endeavour to aſſiſt them more materially, when ſhe had conſidered how ſhe could do ſo, and ſhe would ſee them again very ſoon."

She retired loaded with bleſſings, and returned to Mrs. Jackſon's parlour. In her return, ſhe was obliged to paſs through the room where ſhe had ſeen Lord Beaufort:—Her heart palpitated as ſhe opened the door, and it ſunk within her when ſhe found he was gone. As ſoon as ſhe was in Mrs. Jackſon's room, Mr. Jackſon came in.—She had

had determined to inquire of him what buſineſs had brought Lord Beaufort there;—but, before ſhe could aſk the queſtion, he ſtopped her, by ſaying—There was a gentleman, Madam, who ſaw you, it ſeems, as you paſſed through the common room; he was very deſirous of knowing your name, and how you came here; Robert was ſpeaking to him.

"Pray, how came he here?" cried Ethelinda.

"Why, to ſee a man, Madam, who is ſuppoſed to be guilty of a robbery, and having been formerly his ſervant, ſent to beg to ſpeak with him.—Upon ſeeing you go thro' the room, Robert ſays he ſtarted, as if he had ſeen a ghoſt, and ſaid, how came that lady here? What is her name?"

"Why, her name is Claremont," replied Robert; but, as to her being here, for the matter of that, I believe ſhe has no buſineſs here; but I don't know the rights of it;—maſter can tell you more about it."

"Call your maſter," ſaid the gentleman.

"So he did, and I went."

"Tell me," ſaid he, "is there a lady in this place whoſe name is Claremont? Nay, I know there is; for I have juſt ſeen her.——How came ſhe here?"

"Why," replied I, "it is a ſhameful buſineſs, Sir; ſhe has no more right to be confined here than you have."

"How ſo? how ſo?" anſwered he; tell me immediately the particulars."

"I then told him (I hope I didn't do wrong) all the particulars; for he ſeemed ſo worthy a gentleman, and ſo ſorry for you, that I hope he will be able to ſet all to rights, and puniſh your wicked accuſers. All the anſwer he made was, "Good Heaven! is it poſſible?" But he begged I would entreat you to permit him to ſpeak a few words to you this afternoon, and I have promiſed him that you will ſee him."

"You ſhould not have promiſed him, without mentioning it to me, however, I will ſee him."

"Why,

"Why, what harm, my good young lady, could there be in your ſeeing a gentleman, who ſeemed, by his manner, ſurpriſed, and concerned, at ſeeing you in this place. I thought he muſt be your acquaintance, and wiſhed to be your friend."

"It is very true," replied Ethelinda;—"and no ill conſequence can reſult from my ſeeing him: Probably a good one.—Yet in future, I wiſh you not to relate, ſo freely, the particulars of my ſituation."

Jackſon declared, he would not do any thing to hurt her for the world.—Ethelinda aſſured him ſhe was convinced of it, and retired to her apartment, to conſider over the events of the morning, and to prepare her thoughts for the meeting in the evening.—Lord Beaufort's having deſired an interview with her, after his conduct, ſurpriſed, and yet pleaſed her.—She reſolved to be explicit with him, to inform him of all her proceedings, ſince ſhe left Langley Park, and to clear herſelf from any ſuſpicion he might have of her having any predilection in favour of Mr.

Corbet. She hoped to learn, if her letters to Miſs Lyttleton had been received, whether ſhe had imparted the contents to him; and ſhe reſolved, at any rate, to acquaint him with her motives for leaving Langley Park. In the midſt of her reflections, Mrs. Jackſon came to tell her, that dinner was on the table. She wiſhed to have remained in her room; but Mr. Jackſon preſſed her ſo much to go down, that, unwilling to diſappoint her, ſhe conſented. Mr. Jackſon expatiated upon the good appearance of Lord Beaufort; ſaid, he had behaved in a very kind manner to a poor fellow, who had been his ſervant, and been drawn in to act wrong; that he was ſure he was a worthy gentleman, and that he never ſaw ſo handſome a one in his life. Ethelinda felt a ſecret ſatisfaction at hearing him praiſed, and had juſt agreed to eat a bit of Mrs. Jackſon's dinner, when Robert came in, and ſaid, "a perſon without deſired to ſpeak with Miſs Claremont."

"What perſon," cried Jackſon; "the gentleman who was here in the morning?"

"No,

"No, no," replied Robert; "I believe it is a lawyer; I think I knows his face."

"A lawyer!" cried Ethelinda; "what has he to ſay to me? for I have not yet ſent to any."

Jackſon ſaid, he had better come in.—Robert went out, and immediately returned with a gigantic looking man, whoſe black eyebrows gave a ſternneſs to his countenance, that almoſt made Ethelinda ſtart at ſeeing him.—Jackſon aſked him his buſineſs.

"I underſtand," ſaid he, "that my buſineſs is with that young woman.—I am come to know whether ſhe has found bail; if not, ſhe muſt be removed to Newgate."

"To Newgate!" exclaimed Ethelinda, in a faint voice.—"Oh! Heavens!"

"Fear not, Madam," cried Jackſon.

"And Sir," continued he, "I would have you know, that you had beſt take care what you do in this buſineſs; for I believe it will turn out a deviliſh bad one."

"What buſineſs," ſaid the lawyer, "have you to interfere? All you have to do, is to

ſecure thoſe entruſted to your charge.—It appears very ſtrange to me, and out of the common courſe of things, to ſee your priſoner at your table."

"That," anſwered Jackſon, "is no affair of yours."

"Well, well," anſwered the lawyer;—"it behoves her to find bail by to-morrow, or elſe ſhe goes to Newgate."

Ethelinda burſt into tears.—"Tell me," cried ſhe, "what ſtep I muſt take? What muſt I do?"

"Pray, dear young lady," exclaimed Jackſon, "be compoſed.—I will venture to ſay, that before to-morrow morning, ſhe will find bail; and therefore, Sir, if that is your buſineſs, it is at an end."

"Well," cried the lawyer, "no more time will be allowed."

"No more time will be aſked," ſaid Jackſon, riſing.—I have buſineſs to do, and I wiſh you good night."

The lawyer then took his leave, leaving poor Ethelinda a prey to the moſt agonizing ſenſations"

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Which proves, that the moſt material events of our lives often turn upon what may appear the moſt trivial.

ETHELINDA had withdrawn to her own room, but had not been there much above an hour, before Mrs. Jackſon tapped at her door, and told her the gentleman, who had been there in the morning, was in the parlour, and requeſted to ſee her. Ethelinda now trembled ſo much, that ſhe could ſcarcely open the door. Mrs. Jackſon perſuaded her to drink a glaſs of water, which, in ſome degree, recovered her; and,

with trembling feet, and a palpitating heart, ſhe left her room, and went down ſtairs.—She, with difficulty, opened the door; but the ſight of Lord Beaufort entirely overcame her, and ſhe ſunk down on one of the chairs. He flew to her aſſiſtance, and took her hand. She had got her Eau-de-luce out of her pocket; but had not the power of uſing it. Her head turned round, and ſhe fell back ſenſeleſs in the chair.—Lord Beaufort was in an agony, but had preſence of mind to apply the Eau-de-luce to her temples, exclaiming, "Oh! Miſs Claremont!—ſtill lovelieſt of women—for Heaven's ſake—ſpeak!"—After ſome time, his attentions proved ſucceſsful, and ſhe was prevented from entirely fainting.

Lord Beaufort had been put off his guard, by her illneſs.—The tenderneſs he ſtill felt for her had overcome the prudence of his reſolutions, and, for a moment, when he was witneſs to her diſtreſs, made him give way to feelings, that, if he had not conquered, he

he had at leaſt ſo far corrected as to make him hope he was the entire maſter of them.

"I come, Madam," ſaid Lord Beaufort (withdrawing to a chair at a diſtance) "with the moſt earneſt wiſh to be of ſervice to you, if it is in my power."—He heſitated, and ſtopped.

"You cannot be more ſurpriſed than I am ſhocked, Sir, at your ſeeing me in ſuch a place."

"I am, Madam, both ſurpriſed and ſhocked; but is it in my power? Can I be of any ſervice to you?"

"If you will have patience, Sir," replied Ethelinda, "while I relate ſome of the events that have happened ſince laſt I ſaw you, or, rather ſince I ſaw you at Langley Park, I hope I ſhall not appear in quite ſo degrading a light as I muſt do at preſent:—That I am here, accuſed of a crime, at which my nature revolts, is moſt certain; but (continued Ethelinda, burſting into tears) that I am innocent, though the child of misfortune, is as certain."

Lord Beaufort aroſe, and came towards her.—" Oh! Miſs Claremont," exclaimed he; " where is Mr. Corbet?"

" Where is he, my Lord! I know not; and one of my moſt earneſt wiſhes is, never to ſee him more."

" Oh! Madam," cried Lord Beaufort, " pardon me; but I muſt, however unwilling to ſhock you, by taking a retroſpect of what is paſt—yet I muſt—the ſituation of things require ſome explanation:—Tell me, has not his conduct been moſt reprehenſible towards you?"

" Yes, my Lord, moſt aſſuredly it has."

" I thought ſo," exclaimed Lord Beaufort, " a villain.—How long is it—forgive me—ſince you ſaw him—ſince you parted?"

" Parted! my Lord; I don't underſtand you.—The laſt time I ſaw him, was during my ſtay at Mr. Sandford's:—He obtruded himſelf upon me—and dared—But I cannot ſay—I cannot repeat his inſults."

" But, Madam, I muſt ſpeak of the time previous to that, when you were upon terms together."

" Terms!

"Terms! my Lord! I never was upon any terms with Mr. Corbet, but thoſe of common civility, which, while I was in his father's houſe, I was obliged, apparently, though unwillingly, to ſhew him."

"Not upon any terms with him! Madam!—Oh! Miſs Claremont, forgive me, at a moment when it is requiſite that you ſhould be explicit—forgive me, for bringing back to your remembrance—the—the time I ſaw you in his carriage."

"In his carriage! my Lord! what can you mean?"

"What I ſuffered too much from, Madam," replied Lord Beaufort, heſitating—and then ſeeming to recollect himſelf—"From the regard—from the reſpect I had entertained for you, eaſily to forget—I ſpeak of the time I ſaw you going through a turnpike, by Weſtminſter Bridge, in Mr. Corbet's chariot."

"In his chariot! Was it his chariot?" exclaimed Ethelinda.—"Good Heavens! In what a light muſt I appear to you—to every one."

She ſtopped to recover the agitation into which this diſcovery had thrown her.—Lord Beaufort looked all aſtoniſhment;—he got up—he advanced towards her.—"Tell me," cried he, "Miſs Claremont, "did you not know it—to be Corbet's. How, for Heaven's ſake—tell me how came you in it?"

"I will immediately do ſo, my Lord," replied Ethelinda—"Moſt thankful to have the power of clearing myſelf from appearances the moſt dreadful—but firſt, have the goodneſs to tell me, if Miſs Lyttleton never ſhewed you a letter of mine which ſhe received, after I had left Langley Park?"

"Never, Madam—I did not ſtay long after you—but ſhe lamented not hearing from you; and when I ſaw her ſome time afterwards, expreſſed the greateſt ſurpriſe, at not having had a line from you."

"Then," cried Ethelinda, "that vile man certainly contrived to intercept my letters, to prevent it's being known—that I was driven from the houſe by his perſecutions."

"Good

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Lord Beaufort, "and have you not ſeen him ſince."

"Since I left Langley Park, to avoid him, I have never ſeen him but twice, when he accidentally diſcovered me at Mr. Sandford's; ſince which, I have involved myſelf in the moſt diſagreeable ſituations, in order to ſhun him."

"I know not," replied Lord Beaufort, "how to ſhock you, by adding, that, from the inſinuations of that villain, I accounted, in my own mind, for Miſs Lyttleton's not having heard from you; and the corroborating circumſtance of ſeeing you in his carriage, confirmed his diabolical inſinuations.—Credulous fool that I was, to believe any thing to your diſadvantage:—But, Madam, deign to pardon me."

"Oh! Sir," cried Ethelinda, "appearances were indeed ſtrong againſt me; but, if you will have patience, you ſhall know every circumſtance that has happened to me ſince I ſaw you laſt; though it is very preſumptuous

tuous in me to detain you ſo long—but, in juſtice to myſelf, I muſt do it."

"It is impoſſible, Miſs Claremont," replied Lord Beaufort, with an inexpreſſible ſoftneſs in his manner, "to have greater pleaſure than what this converſation is likely to give me."

She bowed in return for his civility, and then related every particular, except her own feelings, towards him, from the time ſhe left Langley Park.—His aſtoniſhment, as ſhe went on with her ſtory, was exceſſive; and when ſhe told him the reaſon of her preſent confinement, he expreſſed the moſt violent indignation, and ſaid, he would immediately ſettle the buſineſs, and begged ſhe would remove from that houſe.—Ethelinda felt much pained at being forced to accept of Lord Beaufort's interference; not from any diſtruſt of him, but from the appearance it might have, if it were known; but ſhe had no alternative.—She, however, determined not to leave the houſe, as Mr. and Mrs. Jackſon were all kindneſs to her, 'till ſhe could

could find ſome unexceptionable place to be in, and told Lord Beaufort her reſolution of remaining there 'till ſhe found ſome more eligible ſituation.—Lord Beaufort ſaid, he truſted ſhe would not long remain there;—but the firſt ſtep was, for him to ſee Mr. Figgins, which he ſhould do immediately. He accordingly took his leave of Ethelinda, promiſing to return when the interview was over.

When the human heart is oppreſſed by variety of calamities, remove that which preſſes upon it, with the heavieſt weight, and the reſt will ſoon feel light, and, for a time at leaſt, loſe their oppreſſive power: So it was with our Heroine; juſtified in the opinion, cleared in the judgment of Lord Beaufort, whom ſhe conſidered as the moſt perfect of men—the unfriendly appearance of his conduct ſatisfactorily explained, every misfortune ſeemed, if not done away, at leaſt light, and bearable.—She had not felt herſelf ſo happy, or more properly, ſo little unhappy, ſince ſhe left Newton Hall.—The good jailor

jailor and his wife knocked at the door.—She desired them to come in, and related as much of the particulars of what had happened as was necessary for them to know.

"Oh!" cried Jackson, "thank Heaven, the truth will come out at last; and you, dear young lady, will have justice upon your enemies—curse 'em."

"My good friend," cried Ethelinda, "I desire only justice to myself."

"Pray, Ma'am, now," said Mrs. Jackson, "do let me make you a dish of tea—and I have got some brown bread, which I know you'll like—and you have scarcely eaten a morsel to-day."

"Well," cried Ethelinda, "I am much obliged, Mrs. Jackson, by your kind attention, and will take some tea, and some of the brown bread:—But tell me, have you seen any thing more of the poor Benwells."

"Yes, Ma'am, I have been to them—your kindness has quite revived them; the old man seems recovering, and is now crying, I believe, with joy, over his found child—

But

But how the poor creatures will ever be able to raiſe money enough to get away, I don't know."

"We will think of that by and by," anſwered Ethelinda; "I don't deſpair of being able to help them."

"Heavens bleſs you, dear young lady," cried Mrs. Jackſon.—"I am ſure I ſhall bleſs you to the laſt hour of my life."

Ethelinda then went to her room 'till Mrs. Jackſon announced that the tea was ready.—We will leave them quietly to drink it, while we accompany Lord Beaufort to Mr. Figgins.—When he arrived there, he inquired for Mr. Figgins, and was ſhewn into the parlour, where the family were aſſembled, and ſeemingly in high debate. It was impoſſible for the elegance of his appearance not to ſtrike every one, with a ſort of reſpect, at firſt ſight.—They all aroſe—and Mr. Figgins deſired he would ſit down.

"I am come, Sir," ſaid Lord Beaufort, "upon a very diſagreeable affair."

"I

"I am ſorry for it," replied Mr. Figgins. "I have enough upon my own hands already."

"People are ſometimes apt to create for themſelves diſagreeable occurrences," replied Lord Beaufort; "and my preſent buſineſs, Sir, with you, will turn out ſomething of that nature."

"Pray, Sir, what is it?" cried Mr. Figgins.

"It is, Sir, relative to the confinement of a young lady."

"A young lady!" echoed Miſs Figgins."

"You mean," ſaid Mrs. Figgins, a young woman, who was, for a ſhort time, companion to me; and a very bad companion I found her, I'm ſure."

"I dare ſay you did, Madam," replied Lord Beaufort.

"Yes, yes," interrupted Mr. Figgins;—"ſhe did not ſuit us; and I believe ſhe was no better than ſhe ſhould be, in more things than one; though, with regard to the buſineſs in hand, it ſeems there is ſome doubt:

Not

Not but what I will have it all cleared up, before I let her off."

This ſpeech, the groſſneſs of it's matter, irritated Lord Beaufort to a great degree.

"Take care," ſaid he, "whatever your ill-grounded opinions are, that you do not venture to declare them; for though no ſuch ill-founded ſlander would have the ſlighteſt weight, yet the lady you preſume to ſpeak of in ſuch diſreſpectful terms, is as much your ſuperior in ſentiment as in every other reſpect, and has friends who will not ſee her injured, nor hear her ſlandered, with impunity."

"I don't know who you are," replied Mr. Figgins; "but I am not to be bullied by any man."

"Bullied!" retorted Lord Beaufort;—"were you not beneath my contempt, even your own houſe ſhould not ſave you from my immediate reſentment."

"I know nothing about you," replied Mr. Figgins, "nor your reſentment; but I know

know this, that if people are diſhoneſt, they ought to ſuffer for it."

"Pray, my dear," cried Mrs. Figgins, "do let me ſpeak; there is a miſtake here."

"Oh! do, papa," cried Miſs Figgins:—Beſides now, I am afraid we have been too haſty in this affair; but I am ſure nobody could have thought otherwiſe, after finding the locket in her drawers."

"Stay, child," cried Mrs. Figgins, "I'll tell the gentleman all how it was.—After the locket was found, who could doubt about her having the pin likewiſe; ſo ſhe was ſent to priſon, in hopes ſhe would confeſs;—but there is a ſervant girl in the houſe, who all along ſaid to the other ſervants, that ſhe was ſure Miſs Claremont, as we called her, was unjuſtly accuſed; and this morning ſhe came in to me, and offered to ſwear, that the pin was in my daughter's maid's box;—that cleaning behind ſome old books, ſhe had found it hid;—that ſhe was ſure thoſe who could hide could find; and ſhe put it back again; and ſhe had reaſons for having ſuſpicion of Mrs. Smith before;—that ſhe went

to

to clean a cloſet in the room, in which there was a large crevice ;—that Mrs. Smith came into the room ;—and it came into her head to watch her ;—and through the crevice, ſhe ſaw her take away the pin, and put it into her box, where ſhe was ſure it was at this moment."

" And pray, Madam, when did this happen ?" cried Lord Beaufort.

" It was juſt before dinner that the girl told me."

" Then," cried Lord Beaufort, " Mrs. Smith is ignorant of the diſcovery."

" Entirely ſo," replied Mrs. Figgins ; " I had only juſt told Mr. Figgins and my daughter of it as you came in."

" It don't appear to me," ſaid Mr. Figgins, " but that it's very likely this girl may be in league with this Miſs Claremont."

" I muſt tell you," cried Lord Beaufort, " that if you don't immediately take ſuch ſteps as are neceſſary for diſcovering this wicked plot, you may depend upon it that no mercy ſhall be ſhewn to you ; and as far

as

as the law can puniſh, in ſuch a caſe, you ſhall be puniſhed, for your obſtinacy."

"And who are you, pray, now," replied Mr. Figgins, "that dares to threaten me, in this violent manner?"

"No matter who I am, Sir: I am one that will ſee juſtice done to the moſt injured of women:—But I inſiſt upon your ſending for a conſtable inſtantly, and taking that Mrs. Smith into cuſtody, upon the evidence of the other girl, whom I wiſh to ſpeak to."

The authority with which Lord Beaufort ſpoke, had weight enough to carry his point, and the girl was ſent for.—She related the particulars mentioned above; and added, that ſhe had accidentally overheard part of a converſation between Mrs. Smith and a gentleman, who had twice called upon her, ſeemingly wrapped up, and diſguiſed; and by what ſhe had overheard, he had been ſpiriting her up to do it.—This ſeemed moſt unaccountable; but Lord Beaufort inſiſted upon Mrs. Smith being ſent for.—She came into the room with an air quite unembarraſſed.

"Give

"Give me leave," cried Lord Beaufort, 'to ſpeak to her."

The moment ſhe ſaw him ſhe ſtarted.

"You have been guilty," ſaid Lord Beaufort, looking ſternly at her, "of the greateſt crime:—Your denying it is in vain:—All the mercy you can hope for is, from making a full confeſſion."

"What is it I have done," ſaid Mrs. Smith, trembling and heſitating, "that I need be afraid of?"

"Come, come," anſwered Lord Beaufort, "this prevaricating won't do.—You ſhall immediately go where you will be made tell the truth.—However, firſt go with us to your box.—If you heſitate, it ſhall be broke open inſtantly."

Mrs. Smith turned pale.—Lord Beaufort thought it better to find the pin in her cuſtody, and aroſe.

"I own, I own," cried ſhe, "that I have the pin;—"but I found it, and meant to tell Miſs of it."

"Curſed prevaricating," cried Lord Beaufort:—"But be aſſured it will not avail

you.—What tempted you to put the locket in Miſs Claremont's drawer?"

"Oh! my Lord," cried Mrs. Smith, "if you will not puniſh me, I will tell you all."

"My Lord!" exclaimed Miſs Figgins.

"What do you ſay?" cried Mr. Figgins.

"A Lord!"—exclaimed Mrs. Figgins.—"Oh! No wonder you treat us in ſuch a manner;—for Lords, and ſuch people, always deſpiſe us citizens."

"I muſt exculpate myſelf, Madam, from that general ſarcaſm;—for no man can venerate the reſpectable part of the city more than I do.—The trade of this country is it's beſt ſupport; and thoſe who are engaged in it, if they act with probity and honour, not only deſerve reſpect, as being the ſource of the opulence of their country, but great numbers of them, from their private characters, abilities, and worth, are entitled to rank with any claſs of ſociety in this country. And periſh the vain diſtinction, that would ſeparate the wiſe, the virtuous, and the liberal, wherever they are found."

"Why,"

"Why, now, an' pleaſe your Lordſhip, that's talking ſomething like, as one may ſay."

"But remember, Madam," anſwered Lord Beaufort, "that it is real reſpectability I bow to—not illiberality, though it may be found among the richeſt coffers."

"I don't quite underſtand you," replied Mr. Figgins;—"but I know that you, people, at t'other end of the town, are glad enough to partake of the rich coffers at thi ."

"I don't wiſh," returned Lord Beaufort, "to take up more of your time than is neceſſary;—but I deſire to be informed (continued he, turning to Mrs. Smith) how you came to know me?"

"At Langley Park, my Lord, when your Lordſhip was there, and I was Miſs Corbet's maid."

"And ſince that, your tranſactions have been more with Mr. Corbet."

"Why, to be ſure, my Lord, I was in a great deal of diſtreſs; and then one does what one would not do at another time."

"Well, confeſs all you have done," cried Lord Beaufort.

"Bleſs me," exclaimed Miſs Figgins, "I could not have believed this, if you had not ſaid ſo yourſelf."

"For my part," ſaid Mr. Figgins, "I don't underſtand it now."

"But let's hear—let's hear," ſaid Mrs. Figgins.

Mrs. Smith ſeemed to repent of the half confeſſion ſhe had made, and now endeavoured to retract.

Mr. Figgins ſaid, "he believed there was nothing to chuſe between all the women;—but that, as the caſe appeared, why Miſs Claremont might have her liberty again."

"No, Sir," replied Lord Beaufort, "after what has paſſed, Miſs Claremont ſhall not have her liberty again juſt now; for, if ſhe will take my advice, ſhe will proſecute you, not only for falſe impriſonment, but defamation, upon which I ſhall readily be a witneſs. However, I inſiſt upon this woman's being taken into cuſtody."

The

The conſtable had been ſent for, and was arrived; and Lord Beaufort ſaw her under his care before he went away.

We muſt now return to our Heroine, whom we left going to tea with Mrs. Jackſon.—When it was over, Mrs. Jackſon ſaid, ſhe would go and ſee the Benwells; but, as Ethelinda expected Lord Beaufort's ſpeedy return, ſhe determined to ſit ſtill and compoſe herſelf 'till he arrived. Mrs. Jackſon had not left the room five minutes before the door opened, and in came Mr. Corbet.—Ethelinda's ſurpriſe was ſo great, as to force from her a violent ſcream.

"I am ſorry, Madam," cried Mr. Corbet, advancing towards her, that my preſence is always to produce in you ſo much emotion—unleſs I could flatter myſelf ſo far, as to conſtrue that emotion differently from what you have hitherto allowed me to do."

"I am both ſorry and ſurpriſed, Sir, after what paſſed when we laſt met, that you ſhould have the preſumption to attempt ſeeing me again."

"My wiſhes, enchanting Miſs Claremont, "are to aſſiſt you.—The moſt ardent paſſion has led me to trace out your preſent embaraſſments; and it is my determination, unleſs it is your own fault, to relieve them.—Come, my dear Miſs Claremont, think better of it.—I know it will be impoſſible for you to get out of this ſcrape without ſome aſſiſtance. Receive it then, from me.—I will act honourably by you: I will make ſuch ſettlements, as I ſhould expect for my ſiſter;—and, at a future period, perhaps not diſtant, publicly place you in that ſituation—that I am now only prevented from doing, by family reaſons—and I will enter into ——."

"Stop," cried Ethelinda, who could ſcarcely ſpeak for agitation—"Stop your deteſtable diſcourſe—be gone this inſtant, or I will have you turned out."

"That may not be in your power," replied Mr. Corbet.

"Not in my power," cried Ethelinda ringing the bell with all the force ſhe was able.—"How you got here, I know not—but you ſhall ſoon——."

Mr

Mr. Corbet advanced close to her.—"Don't be in a passion, my sweet girl,"—and taking both her hands and kissing them, one after the other ——.

"Let me go, you vilest of men," exclaimed she, forcibly snatching one of her hands away, and ringing the bell again.—The other hand she could not extricate.—Mr. Jackson that moment entered.

"Oh!" cried Ethelinda, "save me, save me from this wretch."

"Who are you?" cried out Jackson, and clenching a fist, that, for strength, had not it's superior.

"Unhand her this moment," continued he, "or I'll knock you down."

"Insolent fellow," exclaimed Mr. Corbet, "you shall suffer for this."

"Tell me, dear Miss," cried Jackson, "has he offered to insult you? If he has, I'll be damned if I leave a whole bone in his skin."

"All I desire," replied Ethelinda, "is, that you oblige him to leave this place in-

ſtantly, and never ſuffer him to have acceſs to me again."

"Very well," replied Jackſon, "he ſhall ſoon be off, I'll warrant ye.—Come, cried Jackſon, turning to Mr. Corbet, whoſe anger and confuſion were exceſſive, let me ſhew you the door; and you may think yourſelf well off, if I ſuffer you to go quietly out of it."

Mr. Corbet, ſeeing it was in vain to contend, ſaid, turning to Ethelinda, "You may, one time or another, repent of this, Madam."

She did not deign to make him any reply, but was extremely agitated, from the inſults ſhe had received, and the certainty that he had not given up purſuing her.—She was likewiſe diſtreſſed, in reſpect to Lord Beaufort:—She half feared his meeting Mr. Corbet—or to tell him of the ill uſage ſhe had received:—Yet, to conceal her having ſeen him, in caſe Lord Beaufort were otherwiſe to hear of it, might make her again liable

liable to ſuſpicions ſhe could not bear to think of. While ſhe was engroſſed by theſe reflections, the door opened, and Lord Beaufort came in. His countenance, always the index of his mind, betrayed marks of irritation and reſentment; yet, as he approached her, it gradually changed with his feelings—and, with a mildneſs the moſt inſinuating—"I fear," ſaid he, "that you have juſt now been very much flurried—perhaps alarmed: Perhaps (cried he, colouring) inſulted."

"I will not deny having been all," replied Ethelinda.

"I thought ſo," returned Lord Beaufort. "By Heavens! I thought ſo;—that villain, Corbet.—I met him going out—and, from what paſſed between us, without Jackſon's confirmation, I had little doubt of his behaviour."

Ethelinda grew alarmed at the warmth with which Lord Beaufort ſpoke, and determined to make as light of Mr. Corbet's ill behaviour towards her as poſſible.

"That I have every reaſon to avoid him," replied ſhe, "is moſt certain; but my anxious hope is, to avoid him peaceably;—for any other way would draw upon me accumulated diſtreſſes."

"Let us," cried Lord Beaufort, "have done with him for the preſent, while I haſten to tell you what has paſſed at Mr. Figgins.' He then reported to her the ſubſtance of the circumſtances, with which our readers are already acquainted.

"I am," continued he, "convinced that that villain, whom I bluſh to call my relation, was at the bottom of this black buſineſs.—You will certainly have the power of proſecuting Mr. Figgins.—How far you will extend that power, you muſt determine;—but I am of opinion, that he ought to ſuffer, where I dare ſay he is moſt vulnerable, in his pocket; and you may eaſily, in this place, make ſuch a uſe of whatever is forced from him as a juſt, though not an adequate puniſhment, as will give, to a mind like your's,

your's, heartfelt ſatisfaction, by rendering ſome of the wretched comfortable."

"You have reconciled me," cried Ethelinda, "to your plan.—"Yes, if I have the power, I will draw, from his avarice, what may make the wretched happy.—Oh! there is an unfortunate family here, that I, by that means, ſhall have more power of relieving, than I could otherwiſe have had. She then related ſome part of the Benwells' diſtreſſes to Lord Beaufort, who ſeemed ſo charmed with every word ſhe ſpoke, and ſentiment ſhe uttered, that he ſat without thinking how late the hour grew: Nor was Ethelinda's recollection much better, 'till, upon Mrs. Jackſon inquiring if they would have ſome ſupper, both ſeemed to ſtart.—Lord Beaufort roſe, and ſaid, "I fear, Madam, I have intruded too long."

"No, Sir," replied Ethelinda, "I feel too much obliged, by your viſit, to term it intruſion; but I fear I have led you to prolong it, beyond what may be convenient to you."

"I have only one," added he, "one thing to inforce, which is, that you will not heſi-

tate, but make a point of compelling that fellow, Figgins, to give ſuch a ſum as will enable you to relieve the family you have mentioned.—I have no doubt, but that to-morrow morning, he will make every conceſſion to you ;—and if you do not exert all the power you have—at leaſt let him receive ſome puniſhment, and become, though unwillingly, uſeful to others :—And if (added he) you will permit me, I will order a proper perſon to ſettle this buſineſs for you."

Ethelinda very thankfully accepted the offer.—Lord Beaufort then ſaid, he hoped ſhe would allow him to have the honour of waiting upon her the next morning.

Ethelinda replied, that ſhe ſhould certainly not leave her preſent abode ſo ſoon ; and after repeating her thanks for his kind interference in her behalf, they parted, mutually more charmed with each other.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A very great alarm.

ETHELINDA was pleaſing herſelf with the conſoling reflections of having recovered the friendſhip and good opinion of Lord Beaufort, when Mrs. Jackſon came into the room, and ſaid, that ſhe hoped nothing terrible would happen between thoſe two gentlemen, though there was ſo much reaſon to fear it.

"Fear what!" cried Ethelinda.

"Why, Ma'am, has not my huſband told you all about it, what high words paſſed between them in the paſſage."

"No," cried Ethelinda, changing colour, and feeling her heart ſink within her; "I have not heard any thing about it;—but pray tell me———."

"Oh! dear," cried Mrs. Jackſon," if I had known that, I would not have mentioned a word of the matter, leſt it ſhould make you uneaſy."

"Pray tell me the particulars?" returned Ethelinda.—Juſt then Jackſon entered.

"Oh! here is my huſband," exclaimed Mrs. Jackſon; "he will tell you better than I can."

"Do, Mr. Jackſon," cried Ethelinda, "explain immediately to me what Mrs. Jackſon means by a quarrel between thoſe two gentlemen."

"It's a pity," returned Jackſon, "that you know any thing about it, 'till it's all over.—I did not intend telling you."

"What! over?" cried Ethelinda.—"Explain what you mean."

"Why,

"Why, Miſs, now you know ſo much, I may as well tell you the reſt.—As I was ſhewing, or rather turning that firſt gentleman out, we met Lord Beaufort, I think he is called, in the paſſage-room.—They ſtarted at the ſight of each other.

"I am ſurpriſed, Sir," cried Lord Beaufort, "at meeting you here."

"And it would have been much better if he had not come," cried I, "for the good he has done."

"I have as much reaſon to be ſurpriſed, my Lord, at meeting you," replied the other, not minding a word that I ſaid.

"However that may be," anſwered Lord Beaufort, "our intentions, I believe, are very different."

"The *object* the ſame, I fancy," retorted the other."

"That I deny," ſaid Lord Beaufort;—"for I come to protect virtue—you to betray it."

"And by what right, my Lord, do you uſe this inſolent behaviour?"

"By that right, Sir, which empowers every honeſt man to protect the innocent and the injured."

"The *innocent*," repeated the other with a ſneer.

"I dare ſay your Lordſhip's viſits here are perfectly *innocent*."

"Yes, Sir," replied Lord Beaufort, "they are perfectly innocent:—But as your's do not appear to me in that light, I ſhall inſiſt upon your making no more of them."

"And by what right do you, my Lord, preſume to enforce that injunction?"

"By a right I will maintain, Sir; a right inherent in every man, to ſuccour the diſtreſſed, againſt perfidy and villany."

"This, my Lord," replied the other, "is language I don't underſtand, and will not bear, and for which you ſhall account."

"In any way you pleaſe, Sir, I will ſupport it; but, for the preſent, I ſhall only add, that you will do far better to drop a diſgraceful purſuit, and to ſtop ſhort in ſo diabolical a plan;—and though the falſehoods you have impoſed upon me deſerve the ſevereſt chaſtiſement,

chaſtiſement, they ſhall, from many conſiderations, only meet with my contempt."

"I ſuppoſe you will be to be found to-morrow, my Lord?" interrogated the other.

"Certainly, Sir, any time before twelve."

"Enough, Sir," cried the other, and bounced out."

Ethelinda, during this intereſting recital, was in the utmoſt agitation; and, when it ended, ſhe could only utter, "Oh! Heaven! Oh! Heaven," and would have fallen from her chair, had not Mrs. Jackſon prevented it; at the ſame time crying out, "Dear Miſs—dear Miſs, what is the matter? I wiſh we had been hanged, before you had known a word of this;—but I dare ſay no harm will come of it."

This ſpeech was loſt on Ethelinda;—but other efforts to recover her were more efficacious;—after a ſtrong hyſterical conflict, ſhe burſt into tears, and was ſoon, in ſome degree, apparently relieved; but her mind was in an agony; ſhe foreſaw the moſt dreadful events

events impending, and knew herſelf to be the cauſe of them. Lord Beaufort appeared more excellent in her eyes than ever.

"What—what ſhall I do?" exclaimed ſhe.—"What ſtep can I poſſibly take, to prevent the threatened evil? Not any thing I can urge will have the leaſt effect upon men who have received perſonal affronts."

Torn with the moſt afflicting apprehenſions, ſhe was ſcarcely rational.

"Oh! dear Miſs," cried Jackſon, "nothing bad, I hope, will happen; but, if there ſhould, you cannot blame yourſelf.—How could you help their quarrelling:—But I will go in the morning, if you pleaſe, and try to find out how things are going on."

Ethelinda, half diſtracted, begged he would get what information he could, tho' ſhe dreaded to hear it.—She retired to her room, and paſſed the night ſleepleſs and comfortleſs.—Tedious were the hours; and

as the morning advanced, her apprehenſions and miſery increaſed.—When ſhe got up, ſhe traverſed the room.—She could not ſit a minute in the ſame place, or give attention to any thing.—Mrs. Jackſon came to her about eight o'clock, and finding that ſhe was dreſſed, entreated her to come to breakfaſt; merely for the ſake of changing the ſcene, ſhe accompanied her down ſtairs. Mr. Jackſon was not there.

Ethelinda ſtarted at every noiſe, and remained a prey to the moſt acute feelings of uncertainty, 'till near eleven o'clock, when Jackſon made his appearance.—His looks did not indicate good tidings; and Ethelinda, ſaw, in a moment, that ſomething had happened, which his good nature did not like to reveal.—She immediately concluded, that the moſt fatal conſequences had enſued; and hardly able to breathe, ſhe juſt faltered out, "Tell me what has happened—tell me?"

"I am very ſorry to be the meſſenger of ill news—but you muſt know the truth, ſooner

ſooner or later, and I hope you will not take it to heart."

"For Heaven's ſake!" ſaid Ethelinda, "tell me the worſt?—don't keep me in ſuſpenſe."

"Why, Miſs, the gentlemen have been fighting, and Lord Beaufort is wounded."

"Oh! Heavens!" ſaid Ethelinda, "is the wound mortal—is he dead;—tell me, I conjure thee?"

"No, Miſs, he is not dead, and there are hopes."

"Oh! there are none, I am ſure—he is dead, or will be ſoon;—tell me at once?"

"Indeed, Miſs, he is not; I dodged about the door; and juſt as I deſpaired of getting any intelligence, a man whom I knew, knocked with a parcel in his hand.—I entered into converſation with him, and by that means, got in as far as the hall.—The houſe ſeemed in confuſion, and the ſervants were talking of what had happened.—One of them ſaid to the other, "the ball is lodged in the ſhoulder."

"I aſked what had happened.

"Why

"Why, there has been a duel," anſwered one, and my maſter is ſhot."

"I was ſurpriſed, Miſs, at the man's not appearing to have any concern about it.

"Shot!" cried I:—Not dead, I hope?"

"No, not dead," anſwered the man."

"Is the wound dangerous?" ſaid I.

"And I am ſorry to ſay, Miſs, that he ſaid it was.—Juſt then, a great knock at the door came, and they ſaid it was Mr. Earle, a famous ſurgeon, from Hanover-ſquare."

Ethelinda could hear no more, and dropped, fainting and ſpeechleſs, into Jackſon's arms.—While they were uſing means for her recovery, the door opened, and in came Lord Beaufort.

"Oh! gemmini, gemmini," cried Jackſon, "I never was ſo glad to ſee any body in my life.—Heavens bleſs you, Sir—you are not dying, then.—Oh! Miſs—dear Miſs, have courage—my Lord is alive, and very well—a'nt you:—What could they mean by ſaying you were ſhot? Do ſpeak to Miſs, good dear Sir."

"What

"What does this mean?" interrogated Lord Beaufort, as he flew to aſſiſt Ethelinda.

"Oh! Sir, our dear young lady was ſo miſerable about you, in conſequence of the high words that paſſed between you and that other gentleman laſt night, that I went to ſee how things were this morning, in order to ſatisfy Miſs, and I met a man, a ſervant of your's, I thought, who ſaid you were ſhot."

"Good God!" cried Lord Beaufort, "run, as faſt as you can, for ſome phyſician."

"Don't frighten yourſelf ſo much, Sir—Miſs is recovering."

They then got ſome hartſhorn and water into her mouth, and ſhe preſently opened her eyes; but perfectly inſenſible and confuſed, ſhe knew not what paſſed.

"See," cried Mrs. Jackſon, "ſhe recovers.—Oh! Sir, how happy ſhe will be to ſee you here."

Ethelinda

Ethelinda, with a deep ſigh, ſeemed to recover her ſenſes.—Lord Beaufort, who had been bathing her face with hartſhorn, dropped on his knees, and taking her hand, involuntarily preſſed it to his lips, and exclaimed, "Dear Miſs Claremont; moſt feeling and excellent creature."

Ethelinda, who had by this time ſome recollection—but, unable to ſpeak, fixed her eyes upon him.

"Oh! dear Miſs," cried Mr. Jackſon, "you may now make yourſelf eaſy;—for ſee his Lordſhip is alive, and well, and it was all a miſtake."

"Curſe the fellow," cried Jackſon, "for deceiving me ſo."

"Where am I!" cried Ethelinda; "what does all this mean?"

"It means," ſaid Lord Beaufort, "that your ſenſibility, alive to every feeling of humanity, has been unneceſſarily awakened."

"Indeed," cried Ethelinda, "I am ſo flurried, that I have only a confuſed idea of what

what has paſſed; but I know, that I had the moſt dreadful apprehenſions: But riſe, Sir—Why are you in ſuch a ſituation?"

"Yes," cried Mrs. Jackſon, "Miſs was terrified to death about you"

"Miſs Claremont," anſwered Lord Beaufort, "feels deeply for every perſon who has the ſmalleſt claim to her attention, and commiſerates the misfortunes even of thoſe who are entirely unworthy of it."

"Indeed," cried Ethelinda, "to have felt myſelf, in any degree, the occaſion of events ſo dreadful, quite overpowered me.—It was more, much more, than I could bear."

"I come," cried Lord Beaufort, "to acquaint you with every particular, fearful leſt ſome miſrepreſentation might reach you:—But (continued he) before I relate thoſe particulars, I muſt inſiſt upon your taking ſomething."

"Do, do," cried Jackſon:—"Go, Patty, get ſome rum and water, and make it very good.—I rejoice, my dear Miſs, that you are better, and that things are as they are; ſo I will go to my buſineſs."

"Thank

"Thank you, my good Mr. Jackſon," cried Ethelinda, "for all your kindneſs towards me.—Thank you (cried ſhe) burſting into tears, which, as her heart was full, relieved her greatly: You have repaid, tenfold, the little office of common humanity which I did you."

"No, dear young lady, "that is impoſſible," cried Patty, the tears running down her cheeks; "but do let me get you ſome refreſhment, for you have not had a morſel of breakfaſt;" and away ſhe poſted as faſt as ſhe could, eager to ſerve one, for whom ſhe thought ſhe never could do enough.—When Mrs. Jackſon was gone, Lord Beaufort, who had been ſtanding cloſe to Ethelinda, and aſſiſting her in her recovery, took a chair near her, and looking at her with inexpreſſible ſolicitude, "I am ſorry, more ſorry than I can expreſs, amiable Miſs Claremont, to be the occaſion of giving you a moment's pain;—and to ſave you from any additional uneaſineſs, that miſrepreſentations might occaſion, I flew to you the moment it was in my power, in hopes that I ſhould have been before-

hand with any intelligence you might receive.—To make the diſagreeable ſtory as ſhort as poſſible, I ſhall only ſay, that Mr. Corbet and I were both warm when we met yeſterday:—In conſequence of it, words paſſed, that neither of us could well ſubmit to; though, from principle, I would always endeavour to avoid a duel.—When Mr. Corbet called upon me this morning, I found there was no alternative.—He is wounded, but not dangerouſly; and being attended by a man of the greateſt ſkill, I have no doubt of his ſafety."

"I am glad he is in no danger," ſaid Ethelinda, "and hope he will live to be a better man."

But, as our readers may wiſh to have a more accurate account than what Lord Beaufort choſe to give to Miſs Claremont, it may be as well to inform them, that Mr. Corbet called on Lord Beaufort about eight o'clock.—Jealouſy added her ſting to his other violent ſenſations, and he was determined, if poſſible, to find out upon what terms

terms Ethelinda and Lord Beaufort were.—Lord Beaufort, from what had paſſed, fully expecting him, had ordered himſelf to be denied to every other perſon, and indeed, had ſpent great part of the night, in making ſome arrangement in his affairs, and had written a letter to his mother, in which he moſt pathetically requeſted her to become a friend to the unfortunate Ethelinda.—When Mr. Corbet was announced, Lord Beaufort aroſe to receive him, with an air of anger mingled with pity.

"Your Lordſhip," ſaid Mr. Corbet, "muſt have expected to hear from me, in conſequence of what paſſed between us yeſterday, though perhaps not to ſee me; but in conſequence of our near relationſhip, I am willing to receive ſuch an apology, as a man of honour can accept."

"A man of honour, Sir!" replied Lord Beaufort.

"Yes," anſwered Mr. Corbet; "don't you underſtand me?"

"I don't underſtand any man's right to make uſe of thoſe words, Sir, who acts in direct oppoſition to them.—As words without meaning, they have no force; and to the true meaning of them, I fear you have little pretence."

"I wiſh to know, my Lord, under what pretence you have been viſiting Miſs Claremont.—Is that a proof of your honour?"

"I wiſh to know upon what principle you dared to throw out to me the inſinuations you did, reſpecting that lady, when we parted at Langley Park; inſinuations equally cruel and falſe."

"It is too long ago for me to remember exactly what paſſed," replied Mr. Corbet;—"but I ſuppoſe I am not, my Lord, accountable to you for my actions."

"Yes, Sir; for I was, in the firſt inſtance, made the dupe of your falſehoods, and, in the end, Miſs Claremont, amiable as ſhe is, was to be made the ſacrifice to them."

"And ſo, my Lord," cried Mr. Corbet, with a ſneer, "you mean to ſtand up as champion to this amiable creature;—this amiable

amiable lady, who can receive your viſits in priſon, though ſhe refuſes mine."

"How ſhe came into priſon, I believe you, Sir, can tell; and that ſhe can diſtinguiſh between honourable and villainous deſigns, is perhaps fortunate for her."

"Villainous! my Lord;—this is not to be borne; and I muſt inſiſt upon immediate ſatisfaction for that and all other ſimilar expreſſions which you have ſo freely uſed."

"The beſt ſort of ſatisfaction you can have, Sir, would be to repent ſincerely of your actions—give up ſuch diſgraceful purſuits—and in future practiſe that honour, which it is now preſumption in you to talk of."

Mr. Corbet's anſwer was violent and abuſive, and it ended in Lord Beaufort's agreeing to meet him in an hour after, a mile from Hyde Park.—The conſequence of the duel was, Mr. Corbet's being wounded in the right ſhoulder, but not dangerouſly.—He was conveyed home; and Lord Beaufort had deſired Mr. Earle to call upon him after

he had dreſſed Mr. Corbet's wound, which he did, at the time a ſervant of Mr. Corbet's, who lived in the next ſtreet to Lord Beaufort, happened to call, to talk over the affair with one of Lord Beaufort's ſervants, who was his brother.—Juſt at that time Jackſon was there, who, hearing one of them ſay his maſter had been wounded, he concluded it meant Lord Beaufort.

Ethelinda ſhuddered for the danger to which Lord Beaufort had been expoſed, and could not help expreſſing, in warm and animated terms, the pleaſure ſhe felt at his ſafety.

"Do not," cried Lord Beaufort, taking hold of her hand, "make me ſet an undue value upon myſelf;" and at that moment he had the moſt ſevere ſtruggles with his feelings, which almoſt led him to acknowledge the power ſhe had over him, and the tenderneſs he felt for her; but the duty he owed his mother ſhot acroſs his mind, and ſuppreſſed the idea as it aroſe; he owed his mother numberleſ

numberleſs obligations :—She had, with unparalleled attention, attended to the forming of his mind.—Poſſeſſed of a large independent fortune, ſhe had remained ſingle for his advantage ; ſhe had ſacrificed to his wiſhes a favourite purſuit of her's, in reſpect to his marrying, upon which occaſion he had determined never to marry without her conſent.—Though ſhe was in ſome reſpects a little eccentric, ſhe was, in others, an ornament to her ſex, and to human nature ; but pride of family being one of her greateſt failings, and one which ſhe did not even wiſh to correct, he could not reaſonably entertain hopes of her conſenting to his marrying Ethelinda.—Poor, friendleſs—in point of birth unknown ;—but love, in fancy, at leaſt, poſſeſſes the power of conquering the greateſt difficulties, and ſurmounting the greateſt dangers and obſtacles ;—and upon this principle Lord Beaufort, though with a judgment that would, in a friend's caſe, have made him open to the inſurmountable objections which preſented themſelves, began

to flatter himſelf that he ſhould be able ultimately to accompliſh his wiſhes;—yet, 'till he clearly ſaw the proſpect of doing ſo, he determined to conceal his ſentiments from Ethelinda;—he had reaſon to hope he was not indifferent to her—and in that he truſted; for he reſolved to come to no explanation, 'till he could do it in a manner that ſhould not be mortifying to a woman, whoſe delicacy, he was aſſured, would never ſuffer her to liſten to any offers he could make her, wherein his mother's conſent was not included.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

A very ſhort Chapter, of little importance, as indeed most of the Chapters are —

LADY BEAUFORT had been ſome time in Ireland, where her ſon, in a few days, was going to meet her, on urgent buſineſs, and in order to conduct her to England;—but fondly, and more than ever attached to Ethelinda, he could not bear the thoughts of leaving her in ſo unprotected a ſituation.

Mr. Corbet was not in a ſtate to have the power, for ſome time, of practiſing any ſchemes againſt her;—and Lord Beaufort

hoped to obtain his mother's conſent to his union, before many weeks were over; or, if he could not ſo ſoon accompliſh that, he truſted he ſhould be able to gain her future protection for Ethelinda.—All his wiſh, therefore, at preſent, was to leave her in a comfortable and ſafe ſituation.—He could not bear her remaining where ſhe was, tho' with worthy people, and wiſhed to become her banker for the preſent. As delicately, therefore, as poſſible, he touched upon the ſubject;—but Ethelinda, though much obliged to him for his attention, ſaid ſhe had no occaſion whatever to trouble him; that ſhe had reaſon to believe ſhe ſhould, thro' a friend of Mrs. Jackſon's, get ſettled very ſoon with a reſpectable family:—That ſhe ſhould know the particulars the next day; and that the perſon who had her little property was expected in London very ſhortly, and ſhe had not, at preſent, the leaſt occaſion for more money than ſhe had by her.

Lord Beaufort was inwardly determined not to quit England 'till he ſaw her in an apparently

apparently comfortable ſituation.—He was greatly chagrined that the urgent buſineſs, in which his mother was concerned, made it neceſſary for him to be in Ireland as ſoon as poſſible; but reſolved, let the conſequences be what they would, nothing ſhould prevail upon him to leave Ethelinda within the confines of a priſon.—He urged her very ſtrongly to take lodgings; or if ſhe were determined againſt that, to go to Mrs. Fletcher's; but to both thoſe plans, Ethelinda had inſuperable objections; and ſhe declared her reſolution of going again as companion to ſome lady—and ſhe hoped to be more fortunate than ſhe had hitherto been.

Mrs. Jackſon juſt then came in, and ſaid, that a gentleman deſired to ſpeak with Miſs Claremont.—It was the lawyer who had been employed to ſettle the buſineſs with Mr. Figgins.—He told them, that upon examining thoroughly into it, he found ſuch proofs of the illegality of the proceedings againſt Ethelinda, that he had not the leaſt doubt of there being ample ground to inſtitute a

ſuit againſt Mr. Figgins, and to recover from him very heavy damages.—That Mr. Figgins, however, was ſo extremely alarmed at the idea of a law-ſuit, and it's conſequences, that he moſt thankfully compromiſed the affair, by giving a hundred pounds, to be diſpoſed of in any charity Miſs Claremont thought proper.—Ethelinda was pleaſed with having the power to ſerve the poor Benwells; and told Mr. Langford, the lawyer, that ſhe begged him to let the money remain in his hands, 'till ſhe had ſettled in what way it could be applied to the greateſt advantage for that poor family.

Mr. Langford then took his leave; and as ſoon as he was gone, Lord Beaufort aroſe, ſaying, "that he hoped ſhe would permit him to ſee her again the next day;—that, as ſoon as ſhe was ſettled in ſome family, he ſhould ſet off for Ireland; but no buſineſs could be urgent enough to make him go ſooner; and that it was with the deepeſt regret he ſhould even go then."

Ethelinda's

Ethelinda's heart ſunk within her, at the ſame time that ſhe exerted herſelf to conceal her emotions, 'till he had withdrawn.—Emotions ſimilar to his, which, being leſs ſucceſsfully diſguiſed, could not fail of removing every doubt of his attachment.

"But what," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, burſting into tears, "avails his attachment.—My forlorn ſituation precludes every poſſibility of any happineſs reſulting from it.—Were he ſo inclined, which he is not, worlds ſhould not tempt me to enter into any engagement with him, without his mother's conſent;—and were he even to aſk it, I ſhould have more regard for him, and reſpect for myſelf, than to agree to an alliance on ſuch terms. Though I believe he does regard me, yet he ſees and feels all the objections to ſuch an union, and the impoſſibility of getting over them; but, though I can never be his, another's I will never be; and I have only to hope, that a life, marked by ſuch unfortunate circumſtances, and with ſuch unpromiſing proſpects, will not be a long one."

The idea of being parted from him, probably for ever, rendered her a prey to the keeneſt ſenſations; and ſhe ſat unable to pay attention to any thing.

Mrs. Jackſon tapped at the door; it was unheard:—She tapped louder, and it rouſed Ethelinda, who, ſtarting, deſired her to come in.

"I am come, my dear Miſs," ſaid Mrs. Jackſon, "to know what you can eat for dinner;—for if you go on at the rate you have done, you will poſitively be ſtarved."

"Pray don't trouble yourſelf on that account," replied Ethelinda; "for I can eat any thing."

"But you eat nothing," replied Mrs. Jackſon.

"I thank you, my good Mrs. Jackſon," anſwered Ethelinda, "for your kind attention; but indeed I never ſhall be ſtarved.—But pray have you ſeen the poor Benwells to-day?"

"Yes,

"Yes, Miſs, I have, and the old man is charmingly.—I told him you meant to ſee them by and bye, and they bleſſed you a hundred times;—and Nancy is conſtantly there, and ſeems the delight of their hearts; and the poor girl cries over them, and ſays, all her happineſs will depend upon her being able to aſſiſt them, if they do get releaſed; but they ſeem to fear that that comfort is at a great diſtance.

"Let us go to them," cried Ethelinda, "directly."

She aroſe, and following Mrs. Jackſon, ſoon came to their apartment.—Their appearance was very different from what it was when ſhe ſaw them before.—Mrs. Benwell and Nancy were ſitting at a little table, very buſy at work, and the old man between them, with a book in his hand.—They all aroſe, upon ſeeing Ethelinda—who told them, ſhe rejoiced at ſuch an amendment; "and (continued ſhe) "a circumſtance has ariſen, which enables me to aſſiſt in liberating

ing you.—Conſider in what manner it can be done; what plan it will be beſt and moſt agreeable for you to purſue, and I will ſee you again ſoon."

"Bleſs you—bleſs you, my dear young lady," was reiterated by all; and feeling herſelf too much oppreſſed to bear their gratitude, Ethelinda ſoon returned to Mrs. Jackſon's apartment, and preſently after, to her own room, where ſhe endeavoured to conquer feelings that her judgment both ſanctioned and condemned.

In leſs than an hour, Mrs. Jackſon informed her that Mrs. Bennet was below, who had mentioned the ſituation, ſhe thought, would ſuit Miſs Claremont; and ſaid, the lady was come to town, and wiſhed to ſee her; and that, if it were agreeable, Mrs. Bennet would attend her there directly. Ethelinda was glad to hear of any thing likely to ſuit her, as it was the moſt eligible method ſhe had of ſupporting herſelf, at leaſt 'till Miſs Elford was able to receive her, or

Mr.

Mr. Hall returned.—It was ſo long ſince ſhe had heard from him that ſhe was very uneaſy on his account, and very greatly feared that ſomething fatal had happened to him. She had written ſeveral times, and never received any anſwer to her letters. Ethelinda agreed to the going immediately; and in a few minutes went down ſtairs, prepared to attend Mrs. Bennet, who ſpoke in high terms of Mrs. Ellis, the lady to whom they were going.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

In which there is pleaſure and pain—reſolution, and impropriety of ~~conduct~~ writing.

MRS. ELLIS had been a widow two years, and had lately parted with a favourite daughter, who had married very well, but was gone to the Weſt Indies with her huſband, whoſe affairs made it neceſſary for him to take that voyage. She had a ſon at Oxford, a very worthy agreeable young man.

Mrs. Ellis had found living alone ſo dull, that ſhe determined to take a companion, when

when ſhe could find ſuch a one as ſhe liked. Mrs. Bennet was a perſon ſhe had known and reſpected many years, and Mrs. Jackſon had ſpoken to her of Ethelinda as a young lady come to misfortunes, but had been deſired, by Jackſon, not to mention the circumſtance of her confinement with them, leſt it might prejudice any one who did not know all the particulars; and Ethelinda ſaw no reaſon why it ſhould be mentioned, as it muſt have led to explanations ſhe wiſhed to avoid, and therefore conſented to conceal it. She was, conſequently, only known to Mrs. Bennet as a young lady who wiſhed for a ſituation, ſuch as ſhe deſcribed, that which Mrs. Ellis had to offer.

They ſet off almoſt immediately; and when they came to Mrs. Ellis's in Soho-ſquare, they were inſtantly ſhewn into a parlour, where an elderly woman, with a very pleaſing countenance, was ſitting.—She, with civility, deſired they would be ſeated, ſaying, ſhe imagined this was the young lady whom Mrs. Bennet had ſpoken to her about.

Mrs.

Mrs. Bennet ſaid it was, and hoped the recommendation would ſerve both parties.

"If there is any dependance upon appearance," replied Mrs. Ellis, "I muſt be pleaſed; but I fear that my way of life is ſo retired, that it will not be agreeable to ſo young a lady."

Ethelinda aſſured her, that retirement was her wiſh.

"However," cried Mrs. Ellis, "I hope, though we ſhall not be very gay, that we ſhall not be very gloomy; for though an old woman, I have the happineſs of having tolerable ſpirits:—But (continued ſhe) I fear the ſalary that it ſuits me to give, is not equivalent to the merits of this young lady."

"In that reſpect, Madam," returned Ethelinda, "we ſhall have no difference;—and I muſt beg of you to wave the ſubject for the preſent."

Though

Though Mrs. Ellis wiſhed to have that point decided, there was ſomething in Ethelinda's manner that forbade any further diſcuſſion of it; and they ſettled, that ſhe ſhould be with Mrs. Ellis the next day but one.

When Ethelinda returned to Mrs. Jackſon, and related to her and her huſband what had paſſed, they both appeared quite overcome.

"Heaven bleſs you, dear Miſs," cried Jackſon, "wherever you go; and Heaven *will* bleſs you.—You will one day be happy yourſelf; for it is your delight to make others ſo."

"In whatever ſituation I am placed," replied Ethelinda, "it will always give me real pleaſure to hear of your welfare; and I ſhall never forget the unexpected kindneſs I have received from you, at *a time when I moſt ſtood in need of it.*—The kind *prayer* you made for me, you have had the power of accompliſhing."

"Don't

"Don't talk of our kindneſs to you," replied Jackſon:—"Did not you ſave me and mine? Did not you reſcue us from miſery and want? And don't we (continued he) the big tear rolling down his rough face, to you owe our *all?* Yes, all we have:—And oh! may Heaven, that enabled you to bleſs us, bleſs you."

"Say no more of that," replied Ethelinda. "What I did for you, you have moſt amply repaid; and if ever I have the power, I will prove my gratitude to you for it.—At preſent, I can only thank you, and wiſh you well. The ſituation I am going into, ſeems to offer me ſuch an aſylum as I want. I hope to be as happy in it as I can be at preſent; but I wiſh (continued ſhe) in conſequence of this event, to ſee the Benwells again to-day."

Mrs. Jackſon preſently accompanied her to them, and ſhe was received as their guardian angel.

"I

"I come," ſaid ſhe, "ſooner than I had intended, to know if you have conſidered upon any plan for your future maintenance?"

"Oh! Madam!" cried Nancy, "my poor father could be happy again—could live again comfortably in the country; but it is impoſſible he ſhould have the means.—His debts are thirty-five pounds; and the little farm that did belong to us, which he let, would coſt forty more to go into."

"And do you think," ſaid Ethelinda, "that you could ſucceed, if you were in it?"

"Yes, I have no doubt of it," anſwered the old man;—"for my ſon would work hard for me, who now works hard as a day labourer; and it was, alas! by villany, that we failed before."

"Then," cried Ethelinda, "it is your's."

"What do you mean, my lady?" cried the old man, riſing, and ſitting down again."

"Impoſſible!" exclaimed Mrs. Benwell.

"What is it you mean, dear lady?" cried Nancy, throwing herſelf on her knees before Ethelinda,

Ethelinda, and taking faſt hold of her gown, ſcarcely able to breathe.

"I mean," cried Ethelinda, almoſt overcome herſelf by their emotions—"I mean, that it is in my power to enable you to have it.—How it comes to be ſo, perhaps I ſhall inform you of ſome other time.—It is now ſufficient for you to know that it is ſo, and that fourſcore pounds ſhall be paid to you whenever you pleaſe."

A total ſilence prevailed for ſome moments, when the old man, gaſping for breath, faintly cried, "Oh!—oh!" and fell back in his chair.

"My father! my father!" exclaimed Nancy, ſtarting up;—"Oh! he will die.—I ſhall loſe him at laſt."

"No, no," cried Ethelinda, trembling; "go and get ſomething to give him.—Compoſe yourſelf, for Heaven's ſake; I have been to blame."

She applied her Eau-de-luce, and he ſoon ſhewed ſigns of recovering.

"The joy, the unexpected joy, not only of liberty," ſaid he, as ſoon as he could ſpeak, "but of returning into the country, and being ſettled again in my beloved home, was too much for me.—My ſtrength, alas! was not equal to ſuch bleſſed expectations," and he then burſt into tears, and ſunk down on his knees before Ethelinda, who was ſtanding cloſe to him.—As ſoon as ſhe perceived it, ſhe inſiſted upon his riſing, and told them, that if they would oblige her, they would ſuppreſs their gratitude, which, though very amiable, overcame her too much. It was very difficult for them to comply with her wiſhes, and they ſeemed under the ſevereſt reſtrictions, which ſhe determined to releaſe them from, by leaving them to themſelves; and a more delighted party it would have been difficult to have found.

Stop one moment, ye ſelfiſh and extravagant, and aſk yourſelves if you ever experienced,

rienced, in all your rounds of diſſipation, a gratification equal to what reſults from ſuch an act.

Ethelinda returned to Mrs. Jackſon's room, with blended feelings of pain and pleaſure.—She had contributed to the comfort of others; and though extremely gratified by the power, perhaps it drew a ſigh from her boſom, when ſhe contraſted her own ſituation with their's.—She had been the means of illuminating their dreary cell with the bright rays of happineſs.—Hope lent them her anchor to lean upon, as benevolence opened their priſon doors, and bade them be free;—but, for herſelf—although hope and benevolence had once, with laviſh hands, ſhowered down favours upon her, they now ſeemed to forbid happineſs from gilding *her* future proſpects with it's cheering rays; and ſhe was led to contemplate the wonderful events, that often appear to take their riſe from the moſt trivial occurrences.

A

As ſhe was writing in the evening to Mrs. Fletcher, Mr. Jackſon came in, and ſaid, that Lord Beaufort was there; and if not inconvenient, would wait upon her for half an hour.

Ethelinda inſtantly felt a ſenſation, which is the effect of unexpected pleaſure, and ſeemed relieved from an indeſcribable weight upon her mind.

When he came in, he addreſſed her with a ſort of trepidation in his manner, that ſhewed how much ſhe intereſted him.

"I ought, Miſs Claremont, " to make apologies for ſo ſoon intruding upon you again;—but I thought—I—I wiſhed to know, as the time may be ſhort that I am allowed the happineſs of ſeeing you, if you will not honour me with any commands.—Mr. Hall, your agent in Ireland—ſhall I convey a letter to him?"

Ethelinda, with little leſs trepidation in her manner, thanked Lord Beaufort;—but ſaid, it would be of no uſe to write to Mr. Hall, as he was expected in town very ſhortly.—She then told him of the arrangement ſhe had made, and of her having fixed to go the next morning but one to Mrs. Ellis's.

Lord Beaufort felt ſincere pleaſure from that intelligence, as he concluded ſhe would be in a place of ſafety 'till his return, which he thought would be in a few weeks at furtheſt.—Though his preſent viſit was only to have been for half an hour, he ſtaid 'till a great clock audibly ſtruck ten, when, riſing from his ſeat, "I beg ten thouſand pardons, Miſs Claremont," ſaid he, "for intruding on ſo much of your time; but ſurely that clock is too faſt:—Yet I believe, if every minute had been an hour, I ſhould have thought the ſame, and been equally unwilling to go."

Ethelinda felt the force and the manner of the compliment through every nerve; but ſhe could only colour and heſitate.—Lord Beaufort

Beaufort hoped ſhe would permit him to ſee her the next morning, and it would be for the laſt time, as he had an appointment upon buſineſs of great conſequence, that called upon him to go out of town at noon, and would detain him 'till late on the following day, when ſhe would be gone to Mrs. Ellis's.

The manner in which he ſpoke, and the look which accompanied the laſt words, pierced her to the ſoul:—Her blood almoſt froze, and his promiſed viſit, the next morning, ſeemed a neceſſary conſolation to enable her to ſupport the preſent moment. Yet it was a conſolation that ſhe ſhould never have again.—At the ſame time, ſhe knew that ſhe could not, with any propriety, have continued to receive his viſits, had ſhe not been going away; and thoſe he had made her, had tended to increaſe a mutual attachment, much too ſtrong, circumſtanced as they were. She thought to herſelf, that when they were once parted, ſhe ſhould be better able to reconcile herſelf to his abſence; and ſhe ſpent

almoſt the whole night between combating and giving way to, her feelings.

A thouſand unpleaſant reflections aroſe uncalled for; and even hope, the ſoul's phyſician in affliction, ſeemed a phantom that ſhrunk from her.—She appeared to be an outcaſt upon the earth, without friends or fortune; by a fatal accident, deprived, perhaps, of both—with an unfortunate attachment, that could only be productive of miſery; and, by preying on her ſpirits and health, render her unable to ſupport herſelf.

She had nothing to depend upon but vigorous exertion of mind; and, after deep reflection, ſhe brought herſelf to that ſort of reſolution, that is drawn by a good heart from a good underſtanding—this would laſt for ſome time—but then the weakneſs of human nature again prevailed; a ſtate of ſuſpenſion enſued, and tender feelings, vain wiſhes—and deſpair again came forward, and took their turn in her diſordered imagination.

The night certainly adds horrors to irritated and unpleaſant feelings;—the general gloom of nature increaſes the gloom of the imagination;—the dark objects which then ſurround our mental eye, we often, in great meaſure, ſhake off, when the return of day diſpels the vapours of night, and rouſes us again into action.—So it was with Ethelinda. She aroſe, after having been tormented with a confuſion of ideas, with a determination of regulating them, or at leaſt of ſubmitting with patience, to evils ſhe had not the power of preventing.

But ſhe aroſe little refreſhed, and very unequal to the taſk ſhe was to go through.—She breakfaſted, or rather ſat at the breakfaſt table, trying to eat, and pretending to have done ſo. As ſoon as breakfaſt was over, ſhe retired to her room, but felt reſtleſs in the extreme.—She looked at her watch every five minutes—took up a book, but could not find a ſentence in it that intereſted her, and, in fact, ſpent her minutes in counting them.

Soon after eleven, ſhe heard ſome one come up ſtairs.—Her heart beat.—Mrs. Jackſon tapped at the door.—"Lord Beaufort, Miſs is in the parlour."

"I will go down directly," returned Ethelinda;—but her heart fluttered, and her limbs trembled.—She took a glaſs of water; and gaining a little more compoſure, went down ſtairs.

When ſhe opened the door, Lord Beaufort went up to her, but with ſuch melancholy and ſeeming wretchedneſs in his countenance, as quite overſet the reſolution Ethelinda had been forming, of appearing as compoſed as poſſible upon the preſent occaſion.

"I come, Miſs Claremont, to take leave of you for, I hope, only a ſhort time, at leaſt what might be deemed a ſhort time in general; though to me it will appear far otherwiſe.—May I flatter myſelf, Madam, that you will ſometimes honour me with a

thought,

thought, as the ſincereſt of—he heſitated—the ſincereſt of—your friends? Will you think me too preſuming in the hope, likewiſe, that you will honour me with a few lines, when you are ſettled? And allow me to inform you of my arrival in Ireland?"

Ethelinda felt ſcruples at entering into a correſpondence; but ſhe thought *one* letter could not be deemed ſuch; and ſhe was ſo much obliged to him for the part he had acted by her, that ſhe felt it would be ungrateful to refuſe ſuch a requeſt.—She therefore heſitatingly anſwered, "That ſhe ſhould certainly be glad to hear of his ſafe arrival; and if he wiſhed it, would undoubtedly write him a few lines, to let him know how ſhe liked her ſituation."

They then entered into converſation upon other matters; but though moments of this kind are ſome of the moſt painful that can be felt, yet few people have reſolution to ſhorten them;—and Lord Beaufort, wretched all the time, prolonged his torture

to the very laſt moment poſſible—when haſtily riſing, he took her hand, kiſſed it, and ran out of the room.

Ethelinda, for ſome moments, ſtood like a ſtatue, and then burſt into tears.—" He is gone !" exclaimed ſhe ;—" I never ſhall ſee him again !—I feel I never ſhall !"

Fearing any one ſhould come in, ſhe went up to her room, and gave way (we are ſorry to be obliged to acknowledge) to almoſt intemperate grief.

" When Mrs. Jackſon went to her, ſhe excuſed herſelf from dining below, ſaying, ſhe had a very bad head-ach, in which ſhe ſpoke the truth ; for as it caught the contagion from her heart, it was not a very ſlight one.

But though her feelings were certainly very ſtrong—we muſt own too ſtrong—yet her reaſon was likewiſe powerful ; and in about two hours, ſhe began to reflect that ſhe

ſhe was acting very improperly, and that, by giving way to her attachment, ſhe was rendering it much ſtronger than perhaps was his.

We have always found pride an excellent medicine in the diſorders of a female mind. It may ſometimes, indeed, become a weed, and over-run the ſoil that cheriſhes it;—but properly cultivated, it poſſeſſes the virtues of a ſtimulus—an anodyne—and a balſam.

Ethelinda determined, that, at all events, weakneſs ſhould not diſgrace her feelings and her attachment; and, by attending to the impulſes of that clear reaſon ſhe was miſtreſs of, ſhe ſoon after became tolerably compoſed.

She went down ſtairs, and told Mrs. Jackſon, that, when ſhe had had ſome tea, ſhe would go once more and ſee the Benwells.—Mrs. Jackſon offered to accompany her;—and, as ſoon as tea was over, they went to

the Benwells' room. Happineſs ſeemed diffuſed among them; and they informed her, that, upon calculation, they ſhould have a conſiderable overplus from her bounty, and thought it their duty to decline taking ſo much;—but ſhe told them, the few extra pounds would help to add to their comforts, and ſhe would not conſent to their having a farthing leſs than ſhe had promiſed them, and that the lawyer would be with them the next morning, to conclude the buſineſs. She deſired to hear from them, when they were ſettled, and gave them her direction.

She ſat a few minutes, converſing upon their future plans, and then aroſe, ſaying to the old man as ſhe held out her hand, that ſhe heartily wiſhed him ſucceſs and happineſs.—He inſtantly ſunk on his knees, as did every one of the family;—but Nancy graſped her gown as before, and catching hold of her hand, burſt into tears, and ſobbed ready to break her heart.

"May

"May that mercy," cried ſhe, "you have ſhewn us, riſe to the Throne of Heaven, and ſecure you ſuch a reward as is far beyond the power of mortals to beſtow."

"Never, never," ſaid Mrs. Benwell, ſobbing, "ſhall we offer up a prayer, in which you will not ſhare."

Ethelinda hurried away; but her heart felt that happy ſenſation which always accompanies a good action.—She employed herſelf the remainder of the evening, in arrangements for her departure, and in ſettling with the lawyer, who had tranſacted her buſineſs with Mr. Figgins.—She likewiſe finiſhed her letter to Mrs. Fletcher, and told her of the late occurrences, which ſhe had hitherto with-held, to prevent her from unavailing uneaſineſs; but now they were over, thought it right to acquaint her with them.

She went down to ſupper, for the laſt time, with Mr. and Mrs. Jackſon.—They both ſaid, that they hoped to be permitted,

now and then, to see her —She assured her, that she should always be happy to see them, and repeated her thanks, which Jackson would hardly suffer her to do; again affirming, that, as every comfort he had was owing to her, she had the best right to every thing of his.

"As I well know," replied Ethelinda, "that it is common for those who have received benefits to be forgetful, I have the greatest pleasure in this marked instance of gratitude;—and if good fortune ever shines upon me, I will draw you, my friends, within it's rays."

Soon after supper, Ethelinda retired to finish her necessary arrangements.—Having something that *must* be done, is a fortunate circumstance, when the mind is a prey to unwelcome thoughts.—This was, in some degree, the case with Ethelinda; though, at first, her unfortunate situation, and hopeless attachment, affected her so deeply, that she was almost the victim of despair.—The necessary

ceſſary preparations for her removal had ſo far diſſipated thoſe melancholy reflections, that ſhe began to conſider, with thankfulneſs, that, in the midſt of her misfortunes, ſhe had found friends, and that her ſituation was ſtill better than that of thouſands.

We are ſorry to be obliged to confeſs, that there is ſomething in the human heart, even in the beſt, that derives a degree of conſolation, from a conſciouſneſs that there are others in a worſe ſituation.—From whence this takes it's riſe, would lead into too long a field to inveſtigate, were we to give way to our inclination, and enter into the diſcuſſion;—therefore, having ſtarted the queſtion, we ſhall leave it for our readers to purſue, in caſe they give it the preference to the being informed, that, from ſome motive or another, Ethelinda ſlept better than ſhe had done the night before; and that, ſoon after breakfaſt was over the next morning, Mrs. Bennet came to conduct her to Mrs. Ellis's.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Natural occurrences, ſatisfaction, diſappointments, conflicts, and vexation.

BOTH Mr. and Mrs. Jackſon ſeemed ſincerely grieved at parting with Ethelinda; and ſhe left them impreſſed with lively gratitude for their goodneſs towards her, for though ſhe was glad to remove from the priſon, ſhe was really become attached to the Jackſons, for their unremitted attentions.

Mrs.

Mrs. Ellis received her with kindneſs.—She conducted her to an apartment conſiſting of a ſmall dreſſing-room and bed-chamber, and told her, that though ſhe did not ſee a great deal of company, any friends of her's would always be welcome.

Ethelinda gave an involuntary ſigh as ſhe returned her thanks to Mrs. Ellis; for ſhe felt that ſhe had not a friend whom ſhe was likely to ſee.

Mrs. Ellis told her, that ſhe begged ſhe would conſider her mornings in general as her own; for it was her uſual cuſtom to remain in her apartment 'till dinner; but from that time, ſhe was deſirous of ſome ſociety, and had no doubt of finding ſuch as ſhe wiſhed for in her: That indeed ſhe ſometimes had a few friends of an evening, but very ſeldom went out.

Mrs. Ellis then left her to make ſuch arrangements as ſhe choſe in her apartments, which were perfectly neat, though not large.

In the bed-room was a cloſet, with ſeveral ſhelves of books; and in her dreſſing-room, a very complete writing-table, with every neceſſary implement. There is ſomething in trifling circumſtances, that ſtamp an early impreſſion in favour or diſfavour of thoſe we become any ways connected with.

We are apt to combine the actuating principles of the mind with the ſpontaneous impulſe of the moment; and to imagine that we are better judges of the heart, from an accidental, unſtudied ſentiment, than from the grave diſcuſſions of reflection.—The ſame ideas lead our judgment in other trifles.—An arrangement of books, pen, ink, &c. for her uſe, made a favourable impreſſion upon Ethelinda, and ſhe drew pleaſing inferences from it. The vulgar mind of Mrs. Figgins would never have had a thought of furniſhing ſuch neceſſaries.

And it is certain we may often form very juſt opinions of people from their apparent amuſements.—Vulgar minds have no idea of refined

refined occupations, any more than a de man has of being entertained with harmony, which he cannot hear, or a blind one, with proſpects which he cannot ſee. However, it muſt be allowed, that we are ſometimes apt to form judgments too haſtily, and particularly to decide upon perſons, with great error, at firſt ſight; and then, in compliment to our own penetration, perhaps are a long time before we can bring ourſelves to do them juſtice, and change our opinion.

Ethelinda, much too apt to take ſtrong impreſſions, was very ſoon pleaſed with Mrs. Ellis; and, in this inſtance, her judgment did not err; for ſhe was an amiable woman, with an excellent heart, and generous diſpoſition.

She had a very good income, but had given a conſiderable part of her ready money, at different times, to her family, upon a principle that ſhe wiſhed to enjoy their gratitude towards her; as ſhe ſaid, a ſmall ſum, given in her life time, would procure her more real gratitude, which ſhe ſhould likewiſe have

have the pleaſure of witneſſing, than twenty times that ſum given at her death.

Mrs. Ellis ſent her maid to inform Ethelinda, that, when the dinner-bell rang, which would be at four o'clock, ſhe hoped to meet her in the drawing-room.

Mrs. Thompſon (Mrs. Ellis's maid) with great civility, deſired to know if ſhe could be of any uſe to her. Ethelinda thanked her, but declined the offer, though ſhe employed herſelf 'till dinner, in unpacking and ſettling her things.

When the dinner-bell rang, ſhe haſtened to the drawing-room.—Mrs. Ellis came in a few minutes after, and ſeemed pleaſed at her punctuality.

Ethelinda found that ſhe was a ſenſible woman, but had ſtrong party prejudices, and retained the ſame ſyſtem of politics that ſhe had imbibed from ſome old Generals and Admirals twenty years before; and thought as much of the affairs of the nation, as if ſhe had

had been to govern it. She wiſhed Ethelinda, in general, to read to her of an evening, and was by no means confined in her choice of books; though political pamphlets always had a conſiderable ſhare of her attention.

She had very high notions of government; and though the good and peace of the country depended upon an implicit confidence in miniſters, ſhe would have been ſhocked at any innovations upon the conſtitution, and conſidered all ideas of them as phantoms, conjured up by a ſet of reſtleſs people, who poſſeſſed either miſchievous hearts, or weak heads:—Faults, ſhe knew, would moſt likely be in every ſyſtem of government, and would naturally, by degrees, creep into the executive part of it: But if they were not ſuch as tended to canker or corrode it's *vital* branches, ſhe was againſt the uſe of remedies that might prove worſe than the diſeaſe.

As Ethelinda was no politician, ſhe did not offend her, by oppoſing any of her opinions; and indeed, in general, as far as ſhe could

could judge, acceded to the propriety of them.

She had now been a week in her new ſituation;—the quietneſs of it ſuited her inclination; but her heart, in ſpite of herſelf, refuſed to take a part in her preſent occupations.—Her mind ruminated upon paſt ſcenes; and her thoughts, however checked, would, in fancy, often anticipate future ones.

Mrs. Ellis's particular friend was a Mrs. Hammond, who lived very near, and frequently came to ſee her.—One morning, when Ethelinda had been there about ten days, and Mrs. Ellis was gone out of the room, Mrs. Hammond aſked Ethelinda if ſhe was pleaſed with her ſituation.

"Very much ſo, Madam," replied our Heroine; "and it will give me very great ſatisfaction if I am ſo happy as to find Mrs. Ellis is ſatisfied with me."

"Then," cried Mrs. Hammond, "I can give you that ſatisfaction; for ſhe both admires

mires and thinks well of you :—But, forgive me, for expreſſing a wonder, that ſo accompliſhed, and ſo young a woman, ſhould chuſe ſo retired a life."

Ethelinda found that curioſity was an ingredient in Mrs. Hammond's diſpoſition ;—but had many reaſons againſt ſatisfying it upon this occaſion, and only replied, that a concurrence of circumſtances had rendered her unambitious of mixing in gay circles, and perfectly ſatisfied with retirement.

" Our friend," cried Mrs. Hammond, " has but one fault—ſhe is the greateſt ariſtocrat in the world."

" Poſſibly, Madam," ſaid Ethelinda, ſmiling, " ſhe might, upon that ſubject, ſay your only fault was in holding too ſtrongly oppoſite opinions."

" No, my dear—no—all I ever contend for is juſtice—general juſtice, which includes a ſtrict adherence in government to the conſtitution, and to the preſcribed laws ; and that thoſe in power ſhould not violate the one,

one, or ſtrain the other, to anſwer their own particular purpoſes:—And, with regard to war, that it ſhould never be entered into, or perſevered in, without an abſolute neceſſity. Humanity ſurely ſhrinks from it's horrors, of which we, experiencing the miſeries and deſolation that attends the ſeat of war, are but *unfeeling* judges.—I own, I wiſh I could ſee that miniſter, who would adopt the humane and ſenſible plan of carrying on our wars by ſea only;—turn his attention to our navy; and, inſtead of ſending ſo many thouſand of brave fellows to be ſacrificed on the Continent, man our fleets with ſome, and keep others to defend our iſland, in caſe of neceſſity; but a continental war can never repay this country for the expences and calamities it brings with it:—But, my dear, you are no politician.—Pray don't you expect Mr. Ellis from Oxford to-day or to-morrow?"

"Yes, Madam, by dinner to-day."

"He is a very pretty young man," ſaid Mrs. Hammond; "and my friend naturally doats upon him:—But I can tell you, that you

you muſt not ſet your cap at him; for he is to marry his couſin, Miſs Langford.—It has been a match intended from their infancy; and I believe the young man is very partial to her; but I own to you, I think it was a dangerous thing to put you, fair lady, in his way, unleſs his affections are very deeply rooted indeed.—The throwing ſo much temptation before him, was not like the uſual prudence of my friend."

"Indeed, Madam," replied Ethelinda, "ſuppoſing your compliments better founded than I can allow, Mrs. Ellis need not have any alarms on my account.—On the contrary, ſhe may be perfectly eaſy."

"Oh! ho!—then your heart is already gone, I ſuppoſe."

Ethelinda coloured, and felt a little hurt at being ſo interrogated.—She was diſtreſſed, and at a loſs how to anſwer, when Mrs. Ellis came in, followed by a gentleman, who, having bowed, and ſpoke to Mrs. Hammond, was immediately preſented to Ethelinda by Mrs. Ellis.

"This,"

"This," ſaid ſhe, "is my beloved ſon, Miſs Claremont;—and this, Richard, is the young lady I have mentioned to you in my letters."

"Every thing that you ſaid in your letters, Madam," replied Mr. Ellis, gracefully bowing to Ethelinda, "ſeems verified even upon a firſt introduction."

Ethelinda courteſied, but was ſilent;—ſhe coloured a little, and felt a degree of confuſion, in conſequence of the ſubject that had been interrupted.

A general converſation then took place;—and Ethelinda ſoon found that Mr. Ellis was, in reality, very deſerving of his mother's partiality and fondneſs.—He was ſenſible, well bred, and accompliſhed.

After dinner, obſerving a new piano-forte in the room, he aſked Ethelinda if ſhe played.

"A little," ſhe replied.

"Divinely," anſwered Mrs. Ellis.

"I

"I hope, then, Miſs Claremont will favour us with an air; and if ſhe will permit me, I ſhall be happy to accompany her."

Ethelinda acquieſced;—the violin was produced;—and between two and three hours ſpent in muſic,—Mr. Ellis was charmed with Ethelinda's performance, and ſhe greatly admired his taſte and execution.

Mr. Ellis, having ſpent a few days with his mother, was to go into Eſſex, where his couſin lived, to whom, though he had not made her direct propoſals, he had given every reaſon to expect them from him.—It was now ſome months ſince he had ſeen her, having been engaged in taking a degree at college.—He had, previous to his coming to London, declared to his mother his preference for his couſin, and his determination of making immediate propoſals; but day after day now paſſed, without any mention of his journey into Eſſex.—Mrs. Ellis began to wonder at it; and the next morning, at breakfaſt, aſked him when he intended to ſet

out.—The queſtion came ſuddenly; and his emotion was apparent.—He heſitated, and ſaid, "he had ſome buſineſs that would detain him in town a few days longer," and immediately changed the converſation.

Mrs. Ellis was ſtruck at his apparent confuſion, though ſhe would not appear to take notice of it.—She immediately ſuſpected the real cauſe; it flaſhed upon her mind, and brought with it perfect conviction.—She ſaw her error, but it was too late, ſhe feared, to remedy it; yet ſhe knew the honour and integrity of her ſon, and from thence did not doubt but that his actions would be regulated by principle and duty;—but ſhe gave an involuntary ſigh at the idea of it's being at the expence, perhaps, of his peace. The ſigh caught Mr. Ellis's ear, and made it's way to his heart.—That it did ſo, was evidently diſcovered by the change it produced in his countenance.

Ethelinda recollected the converſation with Mrs. Hammond; and, upon obſerving what

what paſſed, was ſo agitated, that ſhe let fall a cup and ſaucer ſhe was receiving from Mr. Ellis.—This added to the embarraſſment, though at the ſame time it put an end to it.

Ethelinda remained in her room all the morning, but felt much diſturbed at the idea of creating Mrs. Ellis uneaſineſs, and poſſibly of making a worthy young man unhappy.—She reſolved to quit the family, however well the ſituation ſuited her, if ſhe were confirmed, as ſhe had too much reaſon to fear ſhe ſhould be, in her conjectures.—She did not appear again 'till dinner, when two gentlemen, friends of Mr. Ellis, joined the party;—a Sir William Langſton and Mr. Garth.—They were lively and pleaſant young men. After dinner, catches and glees were propoſed; and when the ladies retired, Sir William ſaid to Mr. Ellis, "In my life, I never ſaw ſo divine a creature as that Miſs Claremont.—Tell me who ſhe is? I am poſitively in love with her.—I know your engagements, Ellis, and that I ſhall not inter-

fere with you; therefore you ſhall ſtand my friend in this buſineſs."

Mr. Ellis was hurt to the ſoul, but turned off the converſation as a joke.—It, however, affected him ſo much, that he appeared rather diſtreſſed the whole evening,—His mother took notice of it, while Ethelinda was gone up ſtairs for a muſic-book.—Sir William ſaid, "If I had not, Madam, known my friend's ſituation, I ſhould have thought it took it's riſe from conſidering me as a rival, upon declaring my admiration of Miſs Claremont; but, as I know his purſuits, and cannot ſuppoſe him in love with two women at once, I muſt look for ſome other cauſe."

"It is eaſily found," anſwered Mr. Ellis, in evident perturbation, "in a deviliſh headach, come on ſince dinner."

Mrs. Ellis looked at him, and only ſaid, "I hope the cauſe of it, my dear Richard, is a trifling one."

Ethelinda

Ethelinda returned, and ſoon completed the conqueſt ſhe had made over the very ſuſceptible heart of Sir William Langſton, who made no attempt to conceal the ſentiments ſhe had excited.

Several more days paſt, but without any mention of Mr. Ellis's Eſſex journey.—He appeared at times very low; ſo did his mother; and though ſhe continued kind to our Heroine, did not ſeem ſo unreſtrained and happy with her as ſhe had been.

A few days more had elapſed in the ſame manner, when one morning Mrs. Hammond happened to be left a few minutes alone with Ethelinda.

"Well, now my dear," ſaid ſhe, "all I expected is come to paſs, and I am afraid my friend will find, that human nature, when aſſailed by ſuch ſtrong temptations, is too likely to feel it's weakneſs, in ſpite even of reaſon, and other ſtrong opponents; but, as

I ſaid before, ſhe was to blame to put her ſon in ſuch a predicament."

Ethelinda was going to reply, when Mrs. Ellis interrupted them, and Mrs. Hammond very ſoon after took her leave.

In a ſhort time after ſhe was gone, as Ethelinda was going to retire to her room, as was uſual for her to do in a morning, Mrs. Ellis complained, putting her hand to her head, of a giddineſs. Ethelinda ran to her, and, with the greateſt tenderneſs, taking hold of her hand, deſired to get her ſomething to take.

Mrs. Ellis ſuddenly burſt into tears.

"Dear—dear Madam," cried Ethelinda, "what is the matter? What affects you; ſay—tell me if it is in my power?."—She heſitated—ſhe ſtopped.

"No—I alone am to blame," exclaimed Mrs. Ellis.

"In what, Madam?"

"Oh!

"Oh! I ſhould have judged better;—I ſhould have foreſeen what might probably happen—and what has happened—the diſappointment of all my hopes.—Pardon me, Miſs Claremont; I do not mean any diſparagement to you;—but I had views for my ſon's ſettlement in life, which I now fear will prove abortive; and that he will not only ſacrifice my peace, but his own honour."

"My dear Madam," cried Ethelinda, a little hurt at her manner of ſpeaking, "I feel the greateſt concern at being, in any wiſe, though innocently, inſtrumental in giving you, or your worthy ſon, a moment's uneaſineſs;—but I aſſure you, that, had the ſuppoſed partiality of Mr. Ellis towards me met your concurrence, I muſt have declined the honour of your alliance.—I am ſo circumſtanced, that I could never regard him but as a friend;—and if, unfortunately, he has any further partiality for me, I think the beſt thing I can do, is to quit my preſent ſituation; though, believe me, I ſhall always re-

member, with the ſincereſt gratitude, the goodneſs—the kindneſs you have ſhewn me."

Mrs. Ellis looked at her with ſurpriſe;—but it was evidently mixed with pleaſure.

"I will," continued Ethelinda, "ſeek for ſome other ſituation; and 'till that is found, I will accept an invitation I received a day or two ago, to ſpend a little time with a friend of mine, likely ſoon to go abroad with a relation, who is in bad health."

Mrs. Ellis, taking hold of Ethelinda's hand, which ſhe preſſed tenderly, ſaid, "I ſcarcely know what my feelings are, at this moment;—I could almoſt wiſh that circumſtances would admit of my ſhewing how truly and greatly I admire you, and that there were no bar to my ſon's wiſhes;—but, as it is, I can only ſay, that your conduct lays me under very great obligations; and you will add to them very much, if you will keep our preſent converſation ſecret from my ſon.—My friend, Mrs. Hammond, has a numerous acquaintance, and many very reſpectable connexions;

connexions;—ſhe admires you as much as I do, and will be happy to find for you ſome eligible ſituation:—I am to ſee her again preſently, upon ſome buſineſs, and will, with your permiſſion, conſult her upon this occaſion."

Ethelinda thanked Mrs. Ellis, and preſently after, withdrew to her own apartment.

Bitter, indeed, were her reflections.—Again to be thrown upon the world, when ſhe imagined herſelf ſecure of at leaſt an aſylum, where ſhe enjoyed as much tranquillity as the ſtate of her mind would, in her preſent circumſtances, allow of.

She had written to Miſs Elford upon her arrival at Mrs. Ellis's, and received an anſwer, in which that young lady expreſſed a great wiſh to ſee her, and begged, if poſſible, that ſhe would favour her with her company for a few days previous to her ſetting out for Warwickſhire, where ſhe was going to attend an aunt, who had been very ill, and with

whom ſhe was to go abroad, and meet her uncle at Spa.

Ethelinda had now an opportunity of complying with Miſs Elford's requeſt, and determined, in caſe ſhe did not ſoon hear of any ſituation that would ſuit her, to adopt ſome other mode of getting her living, as ſhe was miſtreſs of ſuch works as ſhe hoped would procure her a maintenance. Her greateſt fear, from being unprotected, was the meeting again with Mr. Corbet, and being liable to his perſecutions; but, as ſhe had heard nothing of him for ſome time, ſhe flattered herſelf that he might be gone abroad, or at leaſt have become weary of purſuing her.

She immediately wrote to Miſs Elford, offering to go to her in a few days. She had ſcarcely finiſhed the letter, when a ſervant informed her that Mrs. Ellis wiſhed to ſpeak to her.—She ſent word that ſhe would immediately attend her, and accordingly went down directly.

She

She found her and Mrs. Hammond in deep conſultation.—They agreed, that it would be much better for Mr. Ellis not to know of her intended removal 'till ſhe was gone;—as Mrs. Ellis found, if he were informed of it, that it would raiſe his feelings to ſuch a degree, that he might throw off all reſtraint:—Whereas, when ſhe was really gone, and it was paſt his power to prevent it, Mrs. Ellis hoped his good ſenſe and recollection would enable him to act as he ought.

It is very fortunate," exclaimed Mrs. Hammond, "that, at this moment, I know of a ſituation that will be a moſt eligible one for you;—but I think it beſt, if you will confide ſo far in me, that you ſhould not know, juſt for the preſent, where it is, or with whom.—Mrs. Ellis can ſay you are gone into the country—ſhe does not know where—to a friend, who, ſhe underſtands, is going abroad."

Ethelinda readily agreed to this; returned Mrs. Hammond many thanks, for the kind intereſt ſhe took in her concerns, and de-

clared herſelf perfectly willing to truſt to her judgment, in reſpect to the ſituation ſhe offered to procure for her.

Mrs. Hammond ſaid, ſhe would immediately write to her friend, who was gone out of town for a few days, and had no doubt of receiving ſuch an anſwer as they wiſhed, with which ſhe would immediately acquaint Ethelinda. Mrs. Hammond complimented her upon the generoſity of her conduct, and ſaid, few young women in her ſituation would have acted ſo diſintereſtedly. Ethelinda replied, that ſhe could by no means take any merit to herſelf in the preſent caſe; for the only ſacrifice ſhe made, was quitting Mrs. Ellis;—and that was ſoftened by the conſideration, that in ſo doing, ſhe contributed to the reſtoration of her peace.

Mrs. Ellis ſaid every thing handſome upon the occaſion;—but begged ſhe would conduct herſelf in ſuch a manner towards her ſon, as to give him no ſuſpicion of what was intended.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Containing a variety of occurrences, ſome of which, we hope, may be thought intereſting.

MRS. ELLIS had a villa a very few miles diſtant from London.—The grounds were uncommonly pretty;—and from them you ſaw, in many places, the principal objects of the metropolis to great advantage;—in ſome ſpots, catching a view of them ſingly, through viſtos, or clumps of trees.

There was a root-houſe built with a great deal of taſte, which, though in a very retired ſituation,

ſituation, commanded from one part of it a view of London.

She often frequented this ſequeſtered ſpot ;—and having found out that Ethelinda had ſome taſte for poetry, ſhe made a point of her writing a few lines, to be placed in it.

She ſeldom went to reſide at this villa 'till pretty late in the ſpring, but often uſed to ſpend a day there, and return to town in the evening.

Her ſon propoſed one of theſe excurſions, glad of any excuſe that procured him Ethelinda's company.

Mrs. Ellis readily agreed to it, and invited Mrs. Hammond, who was now become a great admirer, and real friend of Ethelinda, and poſſeſſed a ſteadineſs of ſentiment, upon ſuch points that never varied, without very good reaſon.

When

When Mrs. Ellis was alone with Ethelinda, ſhe reminded her of the promiſed verſes.—" And," continued ſhe, " I ſhall now ſet a more particular value upon them, as they will be an additional ſource, my dear Miſs Claremont, of my grateful remembrance of you."

The day was extremely fine, and all the party arrived at Elm-Grove, perfectly diſpoſed to be pleaſed.

Mrs. Ellis, underſtanding that Ethelinda had complied with her requeſt in regard to the verſes, when the party walked to the root-houſe, deſired they might be produced. Ethelinda, hoping due allowance might be made, as ſhe did not profeſs to be a poet, gave Mrs. Ellis the following lines :—But it will be proper to mention, that on a tablet, over the door of the root-houſe, was inſcribed

SACRED

SACRED TO CONTEMPLATION.

YOU, who are led to this ſerene retreat,
Where CONTEMPLATION holds unrival'd ſway,
STOP! if REFLECTION you would dread to meet,
And from her rigid mandates ſhrink away.

But if a vot'ry, at ſoft pleaſure's fane,
(Allur'd by yon proud City's tempting powers)
From day to day you join the thoughtleſs train,
And in illuſion waſte life's choiceſt hours.

'Tis YOU who chiefly want reflection's aid;
Bow, then, to CONTEMPLATION's power ſublime:
HERE—be your vows, with pious fervour, paid,
And REFORMATION ſhall redeem your time.

But if curſed APATHY pervade your breaſt,
And veil it 'gainſt *Conviction's* Heav'nly light,
The Goddeſs, HERE, your off'rings will deteſt,
Nor with one fav'ring ſmile your vows requite.

And yet, fair Virtue may have ſcatter'd ſeeds,
Which, in your barren mind, uncheriſh'd lie;
Or, choak'd by diſſipation's baleful weeds,
Juſt ſpring to life, and bloſſom but to die.

Then

Then enter HERE—to CONTEMPLATION bend;
Her power can raiſe the ſeed which Virtue ſows:
From folly's blights the tender plant defend,
'Till vig'rous, as the tow'ring oak, it grows.

Diſpoſed to approve of every thing Ethelinda did, Mr. Ellis was charmed with her performance, and gave them more credit than perhaps they deſerved; though it is but juſtice to ſay, that ſhe always wrote every thing of that kind almoſt extempore.—The ladies were pleaſed; and Mrs. Ellis, taking her hand, privately whiſpered, "the more I ſee you, the leſs I wonder at my ſon's admiration and attachment; and am perſuaded, that time, joined to the method you ſo generouſly adopt, can alone enable him to recover his peace of mind.

Mr. Ellis and Mrs. Hammond immediately coming up to them, the converſation was interrupted.

The

The day paſſed pleaſantly; and in the evening they returned to town.

This was Thurſday; and on the Saturday, Ethelinda received an anſwer from Miſs Elford, expreſſive of the ſatisfaction ſhe had in the hopes of ſeeing her, and begging of her to ſet out as ſoon as ſhe poſſibly could, after receiving her letter.

Ethelinda immediately communicated the contents to Mrs. Ellis, and reſolved to ſet out on Monday.—She determined to go in the poſt-coach, as ſhe conſidered it much ſafer than a poſt-chaiſe. She now employed herſelf in packing up her things, but it had been agreed they ſhould be ſent to Mrs. Hammond's, in the firſt inſtance, and from thence to Ethelinda, wherever ſhe might be.

As the time drew near for leaving the quiet aſylum ſhe had found with Mrs. Ellis, ſhe could not help feeling very unhappy. The thoughts of ſeeing Miſs Elford, for whom ſhe

ſhe had conceived a ſincere regard, in ſome degree mitigated her feelings.

While ſhe was employed in her room on Sunday, Mrs. Ellis went to her; and after having expreſſed extreme ſatisfaction at every part of her conduct ſince ſhe had been with her, preſented her with an inlaid box, which ſhe begged Ethelinda would accept as a keep-ſake, from her.—Mrs. Ellis haſtily withdrew, before Ethelinda had time to open it. She immediately examined the contents, and found bank notes to the amount of a hundred pounds.—Her feelings were much gratified at this mark of generoſity, but were repugnant to the accepting of any thing;—however, leſt ſhe ſhould ſeem to be influenced by pride or pique, ſhe determined to retain twenty pounds; and folding up the other notes, incloſed them in a letter to Mrs. Ellis, expreſſive of her gratitude;—but aſſuring her, that, as ſhe had not occaſion for her bounty, ſhe could not bear the thoughts of being ſo much over-paid;—it would, to herſelf at leaſt, have the appearance of receiving

ceiving a reward for acting in the manner ſhe was, by every principle, bound to do.—She determined, in order to avoid any altercation, not to have her letter delivered 'till ſhe was gone, and that ſhe would leave it with Mrs. Ellis's maid, to give her miſtreſs the next morning.

Mrs. Ellis had reſolved to take no leave of Ethelinda at night.—The ſervants had been led to underſtand that ſhe was going to pay a ſhort viſit to a friend.

Early in the morning, Ethelinda went in Mrs. Ellis's carriage to the ſtage-coach, where ſhe found two women and an old man, as her companions, and with them ſhe arrived ſafe at a village about five miles from Miſs Elford's, to which place ſhe took a poſt-chaiſe, and was ſoon welcomed by her friend, with every mark of ſincere pleaſure.

Our poor Heroine here paſſed ſeveral happier days than any ſhe had known for a great while;—for though ſhe had lived at

Mrs

Mrs. Ellis's free from apprehenſions, and conſequently comparatively happier than ſhe had latterly been, yet her ſociety was not productive of that ſort of ſatisfaction which reſults from the intercourſe of a friendſhip that mutual inclination had dictated, and reaſon approved.

Miſs Elford found very great pleaſure in Ethelinda's company.—She admired her more and more, and expreſſed the moſt extreme regret at being ſo circumſtanced, as not to be able, at preſent, to offer her a conſtant aſylum.—At the ſame time ſaid, that ſhe ſhould look forward to her return to England with double pleaſure, in the expectation of having her continued ſociety.—They promiſed to correſpond conſtantly;—and Miſs Elford ſaid, that ſhe felt leſs anxious in regard to the ſituation Ethelinda was likely to have, in conſequence of Mrs. Hammond's recommendation, as ſhe hoped it would be but of ſhort duration.

When Ethelinda had been about a week with Miſs Elford, ſhe received a letter from Mrs. Hammond, which ſaid, that ſhe had ſettled every thing with her friend, and deſired Miſs Claremont to come to town as ſoon as poſſible, as the lady was going into the country in four or five days, and wiſhed for her company. Mrs. Hammond deſired Ethelinda would call at her houſe in the firſt inſtance, and that they would immediately after go to her friend's.

However unwilling Miſs Elford and Ethelinda were to part, it was agreed ſhe ſhould ſet out the following day, particularly as Miſs Elford had received a meſſage from her aunt, deſiring ſhe would loſe no time in coming to her.

As they were walking in the garden in the evening, Miſs Elford ſaid, "that obeliſk which I am leading you to, I wiſh to walk round, before I ſet out on my journey.—It was erected by my poor uncle, in melancholy remembrance of thoſe, who, I fear, now only live

live in his memory.—I told you before, that he mourned, in ſecret, ſome ſorrowful events, that caſt a gloom over his life.—He has, in ſome degree, imparted them to me.—He had particular reaſons for not doing ſo ſooner;—but he has now ſome clue by which he hopes to hear of a loſt child;—loſt to him, from it's earlieſt infancy.

Ethelinda trembled, and felt a thrilling ſenſation of anxiety upon a ſubject ſo ſimilar to her own ſituation.

"Was it a ſon or a daughter?" cried ſhe.

"A daughter," returned Miſs Elford;—but I am not at liberty to explain any further particulars at preſent.—A time may come when that reſtraint will be taken off, and I will then ſatisfy your curioſity."

Ethelinda was agitated;—ſhe was inclined, at that moment, to reveal every circumſtance of her own ſituation to Miſs Elford; but ſhe pauſed, and was ſo much affected from the ideas that crowded upon her mind, that

that ſhe could not ſpeak.—Juſt then, a relation of Miſs Elford's joined them, deſiring to ſpeak to her upon particular buſineſs. He detained her a conſiderable time, during which, Ethelinda reſolved upon writing the particulars of her hiſtory, as far as ſhe knew of it, to Miſs Elford;—and ſhe indulged herſelf in the hope, that ſhe might, at laſt, have the ſupreme happineſs of finding her parents and family.—Perhaps it was not the leaſt delightful part of the ſenſation, it's being accompanied with ſome expectation that ſhe might be thought not unworthy, even by the mother of Lord Beaufort.—She had ſcarcely pleaſed herſelf with this reflection, when ſhe began to feel hurt at not hearing from him.—Much more than ſufficient time had elapſed, and he had promiſed to write;—but the fault might lie in the poſt; and if ſo, he would be ſurpriſed at not hearing from her; and believing ſhe was averſe from receiving his letters, would write to her no more:—Or his mother, finding out his attachment, might have inſiſted upon his not

correſponding with her;—yet ſhe thought nothing would prevent his writing, according to his promiſe—at leaſt once.—Should then that letter have unfortunately miſcarried, ſhe might never hear from him again. Theſe ideas cruſhed the bloſſoms of hope that ſhe was beginning to cheriſh, and ſhe retired to reſt with a mind little calculated to obtain it.

CHAP. VIII.

In which there is but little—a character which perhaps ſome of our readers may think applicable to the whole book.

Recte Puella.

THE next morning ſhe aroſe very early, and was accompanied by Miſs Elford, in her chaiſe, to the village from which the ſtage-coach ſet out to London, where, without having met with any interruption to her journey, or any intereſting event, ſhe arrived ſafe, and immediately proceeded in a hackney-coach to Mrs. Hammond's.

She was received by that lady with marks of real friendſhip; for though ſhe was, in many

many reſpects, what may be called an odd woman, yet ſhe had a great many good points in her character, and was particularly pleaſed with any one in whom ſhe perceived traits of generoſity, and a diſpoſition void of that general uſurper of the mind, ſelf-intereſt.

Mrs. Hammond's temper had been ſoured, and rendered ſuſpicious, by having felt the bitter ſting of ingratitude from thoſe who owed her every affectionate attention;—but who, ſatisfied with an avowal of their obligations, and conſidering that as ample repayment for the moſt liberal kindneſs, did not ſcruple acting by her in ſuch a manner, as cruelly wounded their benefactreſs.—Such conduct naturally prejudiced, and, in ſome degree, warped the mind and ſentiments of Mrs. Hammond; but it did not render her unjuſt, though it might ſuſpicious;—and perhaps ſhe venerated oppoſite characters, when ſhe chanced to find them, in a ſtill greater degree than ſhe would otherwiſe have done.

She had, from many circumſtances, conceived a very high opinion of our Heroine, and had painted her in ſuch bright colours, as made the lady, to whom ſhe had mentioned her, anxious to receive her.

It was Mrs. Hammond's determination not to let Ethelinda know to whom ſhe was going, 'till they arrived at the houſe.—In conſequence of it, nothing more paſſed upon the ſubject of her future ſituation, than an aſſurance that it had every proſpect of being pleaſant and beneficial to her.

Ethelinda inquired after Mrs. Ellis, and expreſſed real regard for her.

Mrs. Hammond ſaid, " that the morning Ethelinda went away, upon her not appearing at breakfaſt, Mr. Ellis anxiouſly inquired where ſhe was?—His mother gravely replied, " My dear Richard, there are many reaſons that rendered Miſs Claremont's longer continuance with me improper;—ſhe is gone into the country, to a friend who is very

ſoon going abroad, and I do not expect to ſee her for a conſiderable time, and never in the ſituation ſhe has been with me.

Mr. Ellis coloured;—the tears ſtarted to his eyes;—he aroſe, and went to the window. After ſtaying there ſome minutes, in evident agitation, he returned to his ſeat.

"I am at this moment, Madam," ſaid he, "under the influence of ſuch complicated and painful ſenſations, that I fear I ſhall ill expreſs what I wiſh to ſay;—though I am well aware, that you are too ſenſible not to know the imperfections to which the paſſions of human nature render us liable, and are too candid and humane not to make allowances for them.

"Influenced by this idea, I will make a free confeſſion;—for though I may be culpable in ſuffering the uncommon merits and perfections of Miſs Claremont to have made ſo deep an impreſſion on me, as almoſt to undermine my reaſon and honour;—yet,

under ſo great a temptation, I think I am not void of excuſe.

"I am too honeſt, either to deny or endeavour to hide the truth; and I have too high an opinion of you, not to believe that I ſhall obtain your pardon for the uneaſineſs I have given you. As a proof of my ſincerity and future intentions, I will not aſk where ſhe is gone. I promiſe you never to attempt ſeeing her again—but I will return to Oxford for a ſhort time, and truſt that I ſhall come back again with ſuch ſentiments as will merit your approbation, and render me, in ſome degree, worthy of being your ſon."

"You have ſecured my approbation at this moment," exclaimed Mrs. Ellis.—"Yes, my ſon, it requires the moſt active and exalted powers to ſtop ſhort in the path of intoxicating error, at the check of virtue. Such are your's:—But I will not enter upon a ſubject which your own good ſenſe makes you ſuch an ample maſter of:—Go to Oxford for a time; and when you return, I have not a doubt of it's being with ſuch ſentiments, as will not only have my warmeſt approbation,

approbation, but ſecure your own laſting happineſs."

"He is a worthy young man," continued Mrs. Hammond; and I cannot help expreſſing a wonder at your ſeeming ſo inſenſible to his merits; but perhaps it was ——"

Our Heroine did not chuſe, juſt now, to ſatisfy the ſtill lurking curioſity of Mrs. Hammond; yet, feeling how greatly ſhe was obliged to her, ſhe thought a total reſerve ſeemed either like ingratitude, or a conſciouſneſs that ſhe could not confide in her, without riſking her good opinion.

"At ſome future period," ſaid Ethelinda, interrupting her, "I will trouble you with the incidents of my life.—At preſent I have ſome reaſons for not doing ſo; but flatter myſelf, when I am at liberty to acquaint you with them, my conduct will, in all eſſential points, meet with your approbation."

"I dare believe it will," replied Mrs. Hammond; "and ſhould the ſituation, I am now placing you in, turn out contrary to my

expectations, I will uſe my beſt endeavours to find out ſome other for you."

Ethelinda expreſſed what ſhe felt—the greateſt gratitude; and Mrs. Hammond thought, though gratitude was a flower too frequently blighted in the bud, that when it, by chance, did come to perfection, it's ſweetneſs excelled all others; and ſhe was diſpoſed to give credit to our Heroine for ſincerity.

In the morning, ſoon after breakfaſt, Mrs. Hammond ordered a carriage, and ſet out in it with Ethelinda, directing the coachman to drive to Groſvenor-ſquare.—They arrived at a moſt ſuperb houſe; but ſtill Mrs. Hammond preſerved a profound ſilence, as to the name of the lady to whom it belonged.

They were ſhewn through the moſt magnificent apartments into a room, where a very elegant woman, apparently about forty, was

was by herſelf, reading.—She 'roſe upon their entrance.

"I have brought you, Madam," ſaid Mrs. Hammond, "my young friend, who is prepared to attend your Grace from this moment; and I flatter myſelf, that the preface to my book, looking at Ethelinda, will lead you to expect well of it's contents.

"It was my whim, for which, indeed, I had ſome reaſons, not entirely whimſical, to keep her ignorant of the name of the perſon to whom ſhe was coming; but now it will be neceſſary for me to tell her, that ſhe has the honour of being introduced to the Ducheſs of Sutherland."

During the time Mrs. Hammond was ſpeaking, the Ducheſs had ſurveyed Ethelinda with more earneſtneſs than was quite conſiſtent with her uſual politeneſs.

"I am inclined to think," ſaid the Ducheſs, "that if the book bears any compariſon with the preface, I ſhall be ſo much

intereſted in, and ſo fond of reading it, that ſhall diſcard the reſt of my library."

Ethelinda, courtſeying, and colouring with pleaſure, replied, "If my abilities ſhould but keep pace with my endeavours to deſerve your Grace's favour, I cannot doubt but that I ſhall have the happineſs to obtain it."

"I am much obliged by your coming ſo early this morning," ſaid the Ducheſs;—"for the Duke has determined to ſet off to-morrow, and I have many little things which I wiſh Miſs Claremont to aſſiſt me in arranging to-day."

"Well," cried Mrs. Hammond, "I will take my leave of you both."

"No," anſwered the Ducheſs; "if you go away now, you muſt promiſe to return and dine with us—for it will be the laſt you will ſee of your young friend for a great while, unleſs ſhe has more influence than I have, and can perſuade you to viſit Melworth Caſtle."

"It is poſſible," returned Mrs. Hammond, "I may have that honour in the courſe

courſe of the ſummer, I am ſure I ſhall not want inducements."

"Well," replied the Ducheſs, "I ſhall conſider that as a promiſe, and not fail of reminding you of it."

Mrs. Hammond then 'roſe to go, promiſing to return again to dinner.

It may not be improper, by a little anticipation, to let our readers into the principal characters in the family, where our Heroine will probably remain ſome time.—This we ſhall do in the next chapter.

CHAP. IX.

In which, if there be not much to intereſt, we truſt there is nothing to diſpleaſe the Reader.

THE Duke of Sutherland was naturally of a warm temper, which, in the early part of life, perhaps made him more intereſting; but as it gathered ſtrength, and, from various cauſes, became leſs under controul, he was generally more feared than loved; yet his qualifications made him deſerve and receive reſpect.

He

He poſſeſſed a ſtrong and improved underſtanding, and flattered himſelf that he did not feel too forcibly the dignity and honours that he claimed from a long line of illuſtrious anceſtors;—yet this was, in reality, the darkeſt ſhade in his character:—With an idea that he wa n enemy to the height of ariſtocratic ſentiments, he was, in fact, an invincible ariſtocrat.

Hereditary honours he held in the higheſt eſtimation; and if, in his opinion, they did not take the lead of every other advantage, he thought every other advantage incomplete without them.—Yet he was too ſenſible, and too well-bred, to let thoſe prejudices affect his manners, though they ſtrongly biaſſed his actions.—Thoſe, therefore, who only converſed with him, unleſs gifted with particular penetration, remained ignorant of this—his prevailing foible;—but to his family, or to thoſe with whom he was connected, it was thoroughly known. He was by nature generous, and from pride magnificent; his fortune was princely.

princely. In material points, he ſeldom ſubmitted to the will of others—but in trifling ones, very often, from a conſciouſneſs, that, as he might do as he pleaſed, even his ſubmiſſion was his own choice; and as he was not ill-tempered, he received a ſelf gratification in the compliance.

He was very liable to ſevere and dangerous diſorders in his ſtomach, which uneaſineſs or hurry would often bring on.—He reſpected, and almoſt adored the Ducheſs, and looked up to her as one of the moſt perfect of human beings—which, in fact, ſhe was.

To an underſtanding of the firſt rate, ſhe united good temper and general philanthropy.—If ſhe had caught any of the infection of pride from the Duke, ſhe ſoftened it with ſo much benevolence, that it only gave a poignant finiſh to her good qualities.

Elegant in her mind and manners—highly accompliſhed—ſurrounded with ſplendor; married

married to a man whom ſhe loved, and who was perfectly ſenſible of, and attentive to her merits, it muſt be ſuppoſed that the Ducheſs of Sutherland had no wiſh ungratified; but it was not the caſe; her anxiety for children was a conſtant ſource of diſquietude, and ever clouded her moſt brilliant proſpects.—She envied even her pooreſt tenant who had them, and would ſigh for the want of that one gratification, in the midſt of all the bleſſings that ſurrounded her.

She had paſſed a great deal of time abroad, when the Duke had been engaged there in a public capacity. Since his laſt acquiſition of title and fortune, he had reſigned his employments;—and, upon their determining to paſs that ſummer at Melworth Caſtle, the Ducheſs reſolved to take ſome perſon who ſhould be well recommended to her as a companion.

Not having any children, the Duke regarded and treated Lord Melworth, who was his couſin, as his heir.

With

With every accompliſhment that could grace, and every virtue that could exalt mankind, Lord Melworth claimed every title to diſtinction.

The Ducheſs felt an equal regard for him with the Duke, and was always as much pleaſed with his company.—Buſineſs had engaged him for ſome months; but they hoped it would not be much longer before he viſited Melworth Caſtle.

Having now made a long digreſſion, by way of indulging the curioſity (if any curioſity they have) of our readers, with a little premature knowledge, we muſt return to our Heroine, whom we left with the Ducheſs, juſt after the departure of Mrs. Hammond.

Ethelinda was, of courſe, greatly pleaſed with the appearance of her new ſituation.—It brought her back again to that elegance to which ſhe had been ſo long accuſtomed, and ſeemed to promiſe comforts ſhe had been

for

for ſome time deprived of.—She was, however, too ſenſible not to be well aware of their inſtability, well knew the uncertainty of her ſituation, and, from experience, felt the too great probability, that ſome unforeſeen occurrence might cauſe her moſt flattering proſpects to end in diſappointment.

When the Ducheſs had determined to take a companion, ſhe immediately applied to Mrs. Hammond, whoſe judgment ſhe thought, would exactly point out the proper perſon for her purpoſe.——She knew thoſe ſort of connexions often became an incumbrance; but, as it was ſo amply in her power to make a recompence for any change in her mind, ſhe did not conſider it as much objection againſt trying how far ſhe ſhould derive amuſement from ſuch a plan; and preferred taking an entire ſtranger to the inviting any lady of her acquaintance to accompany her, whom ſhe could not ſo eaſily get rid of, and who would not feel the ſame deſire to ſtudy her inclinations.

Mrs.

Mrs. Hammond had ſpoken highly in favour of Ethelinda, but had not mentioned the uncommon beauty of her perſon.—The Ducheſs was therefore ſtruck in a very great degree, by her appearance, and ſtill more by her elegance of manners.

Mrs. Hammond would gladly have told her hiſtory, had ſhe known it; but not knowing it, ſhe only mentioned the commencement of their acquaintance at Mrs. Ellis's, and her having ſeen ſeveral traits in Miſs Claremont's character, which had done her great credit.

The Ducheſs was ſoon of opinion, that ſomething very particular muſt have occaſioned Ethelinda's being in ſuch a ſituation; but was much too well bred, and poſſeſſed too much delicacy, to give the ſlighteſt hint that ſhe had any curioſity upon that point.

"If," ſaid the Dutcheſs, taking Ethelinda by the hand, "I am not more miſtaken than ever I yet was in my life, I ſhall, by the acquiſition

quiſition of your company, ſpend a very pleaſant ſummer at Melworth Caſtle; and the diſappointment will be very great to myſelf, if you have not ſoon a conſiderable intereſt in my heart."

There was ſomething in her way of ſpeaking, when the Ducheſs was particularly intereſted, uncommonly attracting; and there ſeemed a growing affection, united with ſuch grace and ſoftneſs in her manner, that penetrated to the heart of Ethelinda, and rouſed her moſt tender feelings.

" If, Madam," with tears gliſtening in her eyes, " I ſhould fail of being ſo fortunate as to convince you how ambitious I am of your good opinion, and how truly I ſhall value it, I ſhall conſider that failure among the greateſt of my misfortunes:—" And (continued ſhe) I have known, though ſo young, very great ones."

She ſpoke this with conſiderable agitation.

" We

"We will not advert to paſt misfortunes," replied the Ducheſs, again preſſing her hand—"It is the lot of humanity to meet with them in every ſtation.—Whatever your's have been, I can almoſt anſwer for it, they were unmerited;—but we will look to brighter proſpects."

"Forgive me," exclaimed Ethelinda, "for having, in conſequence of feeling your kindneſs as I ought to feel it, been hurried to the preſumption I was guilty of.—I am aſhamed of having given ſuch a ſpecimen of my behaviour, as ſo ſoon to require forgiveneſs;—it will give your Grace, I fear, an unfavourable opinion of me."

No," returned the Ducheſs; "you muſt act very differently to make me think unfavourably of you;—but come to my apartment, and aſſiſt me in ſelecting ſome books that I wiſh to carry with us.—You love reading, I underſtand, and read, I hear, uncommonly well."

"Mrs. Hammond's partiality, Madam, has, in the latter inſtance, I fear, gone beyond

yond the fact—though I love reading better than any other amuſement."

"Do you not play upon ſome inſtrument?"

"Yes, Madam, both the piano-forte and harp."

"Do you indeed play upon the harp!—Have you one?"

"No, Madam, I now have not."

"I am very glad," replied the Ducheſs, "that you have mentioned this circumſtance.—I am going out this morning, and hope you will have no objection to go with me, and we will get the beſt we can for the preſent.—The Duke will be quite delighted, when he knows you play on the harp.—We muſt get ſome muſic too;—but we will order the carriage immediately, as we ſhall not have too much time before dinner.—Your trunks are to come this evening from Mrs. Hammond's, as they muſt go with our things to-morrow."

The carriage was ſoon ready, and they ſet off ſhopping.

Ethelinda

Ethelinda would rather not have gone; ſhe dreaded leſt any unlucky chance ſhould throw her again in Mr. Corbet's way; but ſhe hoped, as they were to be out but a ſhort time, ſhe ſhould eſcape ſo great a misfortune.

The Ducheſs, among other places, went to ſeveral muſic ſhops, and at laſt found a pretty good harp for Ethelinda, which ſhe hired for the preſent. She ſtopped at Young Grey's, and purchaſed the moſt faſhionable necklace and ear-rings; from thence went to Mrs. Forreſtier's (her milliner) and ordered ſeveral of the moſt faſhionable articles, with ſome beautiful muſlin for gowns, all which ſhe preſented to Ethelinda, feeling a prejudice in her favour, that ſhe wiſhed to make appear, and determined to give her conſequence in the family, by treating her with diſtinction herſelf.

When they returned home, it was ſo late, they had hardly time to make any alteration in their dreſs;—but a great deal

was

was not neceſſary; and Ethelinda ſoon appeared in the drawing-room, where ſhe found Mrs. Hammond in cloſe converſation with the Ducheſs.—Ethelinda was going to retire again, when the Ducheſs, in the moſt gracious and inſinuating manner, deſired ſhe would come in.

"I am only engaged," continued ſhe, "in returning my thanks to Mrs. Hammond, for the treaſure ſhe has diſcovered for me."

Juſt then the Duke, whom Ethelinda had not ſeen before, entered.—His figure was elegant, but it inſpired awe.—His manner was graceful, though accompanied with a ſort of reſerve that ſet moſt people at a diſtance:—But when he ſpoke, it generally was with that eaſe and complacency that rather encouraged familiarity than reſtraint.—He bowed, and ſpoke to Mrs. Hammond.—The Ducheſs then introduced Miſs Claremont.—As he made his bow to her, he ſurveyed her with particular attention:—Spoke

to

to her very politely, but ſaid nothing more than might be expected on the occaſion.

The day paſſed pleaſantly; and Ethelinda made a very favourable impreſſion upon the minds of the whole party.

Early the next morning, they ſet out—the Duke and Ducheſs, and Ethelinda, in the coach—and the Ducheſs's two women, with the Duke's valet, in a poſt-chaiſe.

"There is a young woman, who is niece to one of my houſe-keepers in the country," ſaid the Ducheſs, "who will, I have been thinking, be a fit perſon to attend upon you, Miſs Claremont;—I am ſure you will be pleaſed with her—ſhe is amiable and intelligent."

Ethelinda, returning many thanks, ſaid, "ſhe required very little attendance;—ſhe had ſo long been uſed to attend upon herſelf, that ſhe found no difficulty in it."

"But," replied the Ducheſs, "I wiſh for employment for this girl, and can find none that I ſhall think ſo eligible."

When

When they ſtopped to dine the ſecond day, while dinner was getting ready, the Duke propoſed a walk to ſome ruins, which he was very deſirous of ſeeing. When they got there, he ſaid that he muſt ſend ſome one to take a ſketch of them.

Ethelinda mentioned, that ſhe had ſome little knowledge of drawing in that ſtile;—and if his Grace would permit her, ſhe could ſoon take a ſketch, and finiſh it another time. The Duke ſeemed pleaſed with the propoſal.——She happened to have a pencil and paper, and ſoon convinced him that ſhe was a very maſterly performer.——He was extremely pleaſed, and ſaid, he ſhould often deſire her to exert her genius in that way.

From that time he appeared to unbend, and entered very pleaſantly into converſation on painting.—Ethelinda's remarks convinced him of her knowledge and love of that art; and he at times appeared quite delighted

with her, which always ſeemed to give the Ducheſs particular ſatisfaction.

In the evening of the third day from their ſetting out, they arrived in the midſt of ringing of bells, and bonfires, at MELWORTH CASTLE.

This famous Caſtle and domain had been for ages in the noble family to whom it now belonged

It had ſtood the ravages of time, and it's foundations had witneſſed the various revolutions of many centuries.—The contemplative obſerver might exclaim, "Since theſe ſtones were cemented together, what changes have the baleful uncurbed paſſions of mankind wrought.—In conſequence of them, what deſolation has covered the land—barbariſm has not committed more atrocious deeds than ambition;—and civilization has often proved itſelf an abettor of cruelty, as religion has of inhumanity."

Nothing

Nothing could exceed the magnificence of the Caſtle;—and Mr. Burke would have allowed, that it united the beautiful and the ſublime.—The building was a quadrangle; the baſement ſtory was the part chiefly inhabited by the family, except on particular occaſions, and that was uncommonly lofty, and the apartments ſplendid.—What were called the ſhew apartments, were indeed princely. The preſent Duke had only been in poſſeſſion of it a few months, but reſolved, from the moment it became his, to make it his reſidence for a conſiderable part of the year.

The ideas of true ancient nobility were all his own, and he conſidered it as a ſort of duty to live among his dependants.—He felt that it was his own fault, if he were not reſpected by them, but that it was impoſſible he could be ſo, unleſs he lived among them, and that his real conſequence could not be ſo great any where elſe.

The morning after their arrival was employed in ſurveying this magnificent pile of building.—It had not received any diminution from it's laſt poſſeſſor, who indeed, on the contrary, had ſpent immenſe ſums in decorating the apartments. Some of them had been kept up in their ancient ſtile, while others had been moderniſed with all the elegance that taſte and expence could give them.

The park was extenſive and beautiful.—Hills and valleys diverſified the ſcene; and the adjacent woods with a large lake and very fine river united to render the proſpect every thing that nature could beſtow.

One ſcene in it put Ethelinda in mind of her beloved Newton Hall, and ſhe ſecretly reſolved to pay it many viſits. It was at one part of the lake, where there was a conſiderable fall of water, almoſt ſurrounded by a wood, that ſeemed nearly impervious.—There was a rock on one ſide, with a cavern cut entirely through it, and ſo ſituated, that when

when you were in it, water appeared at each end of the viſta.

There were ſeveral large chaſms in the cavern, any one of which, Ethelinda thought, might eaſily be converted into a beautiful grotto; and ſhe was not without hopes of perſuading the Ducheſs to make one, and let her have, in ſome degree, the direction of it.

The Ducheſs became fonder of her every day, and the Duke appeared, in the higheſt degree, equally pleaſed with her.

It was the Ducheſs's cuſtom to be, for two hours after breakfaſt alone; after that period, Ethelinda either walked with her, or read to her;—and after dinner, or rather before tea time, the Ducheſs likewiſe retired for an hour, and the evening was uſually ſpent en famille.

Ethelinda would have been very happy in this ſituation, had ſhe never known Lord

Beaufort; but though ſhe uſed every endeavour, and exerted her ſtrong underſtanding to it's utmoſt, ſhe continually felt the impoſſibility of baniſhing him ſo far from her mind, as to recover more than tolerable tranquillity. Indeed, at times, ſhe would retire to the lonely ſpot we have juſt deſcribed;—indulge herſelf with looking at his picture, and ruminate upon paſt occurrences, 'till ſhe was bathed in tears.—Her never having heard from him hurt her very greatly; and whether this aroſe from deſign or accident was unknown to her—the effect was the ſame.—Her beloved Mr. Hall was loſt to her.—In vain had ſhe written to him repeatedly.——She feared he was no more.——Miſs Elford, and the worthy Mrs. Fletcher, were all the friends ſhe could boaſt of in the world; and they were ſo circumſtanced, as to be unable, at preſent, to render her much ſervice.

She uſed frequently to take her harp, and go to one of the caverns in the rock, which ſhe called the Hermit's cell.

She

She had been ſitting there one morning, when a ſervant informed her that the Ducheſs wiſhed to ſee her.—Always anxious to obey her commands, ſhe immediately haſtened to the Caſtle.

"I ſent for you, my dear," ſaid the Ducheſs, "to beg you to write a letter for me, in conſequence of the arrival of our couſin, Lord Melworth, who is juſt come, and is now upon buſineſs with the Duke.—I do aſſure you (continued the Ducheſs) you muſt ſteel your heart againſt his attractions; for, as he is pre-engaged, continued ſhe, ſmiling, it would not be fair to let him give full ſcope to ſuch powers, without applying an antidote to them."

"I am obliged to your Grace for the caution; though I may aſſure you, that I ſhall be in no danger," returned Ethelinda, colouring, and feeling rather hurt, that the Ducheſs ſhould think it neceſſary to put her ſo much upon her guard.

"I do aſſure you," replied the Ducheſs, "if any man is dangerous, Lord Melworth

is; for the more he is known, the more judgment muſt approve the partiality he never fails of creating in his favour."

"But, Madam, had Lord Melworth every attraction that mortal can poſſeſs, the only effects his powers could have upon my mind would be thoſe of due approbation, and limited admiration, without it's being poſſible for them to excite a more tender ſentiment in my boſom."

"Well, my dear," cried the Ducheſs, "I have no doubt of your having every proper command over yourſelf;—but I know, from experience, that the heart, and more particularly an amiable heart, cannot always vanquiſh a formidable enemy."

"Under ſome circumſtances, Madam, the moſt tender heart may oppoſe itſelf to the moſt powerful aſſailant."

The converſation was interrupted by a ſervant bringing a meſſage to the Ducheſs, who, when Ethelinda had written the letter before-mentioned, propoſed taking a walk, from which they did not return 'till it was time to dreſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

A general ſurpriſe—followed by a great deal of apprehenſion, and very little deciſion.

WHEN Ethelinda was ready for dinner, ſhe went, as uſual, into the drawing-room.—The Duke and Ducheſs were already there, and Lord Melworth ſtanding with his back to them, looking out of the window—when, to the utmoſt aſtoniſhment of Ethelinda, her poor old dog, little Belle, ran up to her, jumped upon her, and ſeemed almoſt wild with joy.

"Lord Melworth," cried the Ducheſs, "let me introduce you to Miſs Claremont, a young lady, who is with me."

He turned ſuddenly round, and ſtood fixed as a ſtatue,——while Ethelinda, at the unexpected ſight of Lord Beaufort, was ready to ſink into the earth.

At laſt he made her a bow, and muttered ſomething that could ſcarcely be underſtood.

She, with difficulty and heſitation, anſwered in the ſame manner.

The Duke and Ducheſs were evidently ſurpriſed, but ſaid nothing.

The little Belle kept jumping upon Ethelinda, and would not be eaſy out of her lap.

"I fancy, Miſs Claremont," ſaid the Ducheſs, that little dog is an old acquaintance"

"Yes,

"Yes, Madam—yes, Madam," replied Ethelinda, ſtill very much agitated, "the dog once belonged to a beloved friend of mine, who——who is now no more."

The tears came into her eyes, and ſhe was obliged to have recourſe to her pocket handkerchief.

A very awkward ſilence then took place; and at this period, we think it as well to give our readers ſome little clue, by which they may underſtand the ſource of the preſent ſcene.

After Lord Beaufort had parted, in the priſon, from Ethelinda, he went to Ireland While there, the late Duke of Sutherland died, and the Dukedom and domain of Melworth Caſtle came to his couſin, the preſent Duke; and the Earldom of Melworth had devolved to Lord Beaufort during that period, from the female line, and in conſequence of the death of his grandmother.

It has been mentioned before, that Lady Cecilia Corbet was ſiſter to the Earl of Weſtville, now Duke of Sutherland; but ſo great a coolneſs had taken place between her and the preſent Duke and Ducheſs, that they never mentioned her or her family.—— Within a few days, peace had been negociated, at the earneſt ſolicitation of the Corbets; in conſequence, it was ſuppoſed, of Miſs Corbet's attachment to Lord Melworth; and the Duke, who was a friend to family alliances, and had been led to think well of Miſs Corbet, wiſhed very much to bring that connexion about.

Lord Melworth had written to Ethelinda; but owing to ſome untoward circumſtance, ſhe had never received the letter, and of courſe had not written to him.

As ſoon as he arrived in London from Ireland, he had made inquiries after her;— but Mrs. Jackſon's friend, being out of town, he could learn nothing more, than that ſhe was gone into the country. Greatly diſappointed,

diſappointed, he knew not how to trace her, which he anxiouſly wiſhed to have done, notwithſtanding he had not the ſmalleſt hopes of his mother's or the Duke's conſent to his making ſuch an alliance; but he adored Ethelinda; and being convinced ſhe was the only woman he ſhould ever love, he determined never to marry while ſhe remained ſingle;—and flattered himſelf, there might arrive a period when he ſhould be able to ſurmount his preſent difficulties;—difficulties greatly increaſed, or rather made much more apparent, by ſome converſations he had had with his mother.

To ſee Ethelinda ſo unexpectedly—to ſee her at the Duke's—aſtoniſhed him beyond meaſure.—He evidently perceived ſhe was as much amazed as himſelf, and that the interview was to her equally unexpected.—He very ſoon gueſſed the ſituation ſhe was in, and determined not to appear ever to have ſeen her before, in which he imagined that he ſhould accord with her wiſhes.

He

He flattered himſelf, that neither the Duke nor Ducheſs obſerved the embarraſſment that the interview occaſioned, and endeavoured to rally his ſpirits and compoſe his manners.

Dinner was almoſt immediately announced, and the partie quarrie ſat down, abſorbed in various reflections, though each perſon endeavoured to appear eaſy and unreſtrained.—But minds ſo occupied ſoon loſt their attention to others, and, by degrees, almoſt total ſilence prevailed.

When they ſeparated after dinner, Ethelinda retired to her apartment, a prey to perplexity and uneaſineſs.

To have found in Lord Melworth her ſo much loved Lord Beaufort, was no cauſe of additional happineſs to her.

The Ducheſs had declared him pre-engaged.—If ſo, why—ah! why, had he ſhewn her ſuch marked attentions—attentions that

at

at once ſeemed to expreſs his own attachment, and tended to inſpire her with the ſame.

Yet perhaps it was involuntary, and regretted by himſelf.—Indeed, from his never having, in direct terms, either ſolicited her affection, or declared his own towards her, ſhe had no right to complain.—When ſhe reflected, it appeared clearly, that if he had an attachment to her, he ſtruggled againſt it, which indeed might be the reaſon of his not having written to her.

Upon this ground, and under theſe impreſſions, ſhe determined her conduct towards him ſhould be regulated.—She would ſhun him as much as poſſible, and act with as much reſerve towards him as ſhe could do, without raiſing the obſervation of the Duke and Ducheſs upon her conduct; and if ſhe found herſelf unequal to the taſk, ſhe determined upon quitting her ſituation, eligible as it was in other reſpects.

The Duke's connexion, and late reconciliation with the Corbet family, which ſhe had now heard of, was, in itſelf, a terrible, a moſt unfortunate circumſtance for her, and might be the means of involving her in freſh difficulties with Mr. Corbet; but as ſhe did not hear that any of the family were likely to come to Melworth Caſtle, ſhe had no cauſe, at preſent, to be apprehenſive upon that account, and Miſs Elford, ſhe hoped, would return home in Autumn.

The ſweet hope then again preſented itſelf of a poſſibility that ſhe might be allied to that amiable friend;—and if ſo, ſhe might ſoon have a conſtant aſylum, and be under the protection of a parent.—This hope, faint as it was, helped to cheer her, and chaſe away the preſent deſpondency of her mind.

She conſidered whether ſhe ſhould tell the Ducheſs of her previous acquaintance with Lord Beaufort.—She was convinced, that the awkwardneſs, apparent upon their introduction to each other, could not have entirely

tirely eſcaped the Ducheſs's obſervation—and ſhe thought it would be better to ſay that they had met before, and that ſhe had been ſome time at Lady Cecilia Corbet's—but ſhe ſaw a thouſand objections to the acquainting the Ducheſs with every particular, as it muſt lead to explanations that ſhe could not, on many accounts, enter into:—She thought it neceſſary to acquaint Lord Melworth with her intentions, and determined to ſeek for an opportunity of doing ſo.—It luckily preſented itſelf immediately; for going into the Ducheſs's apartment, ſhe found Lord Melworth ſitting there, leaning upon his hand, in the deepeſt contemplation.

He had found the woman he adored;—but having ſlightly hinted to his mother ſomething of his attachment, it produced a converſation, in which ſhe moſt peremptorily declared her objections to his ever uniting himſelf to any perſon of an inferior rank.

The

The Duke too, who had the greateſt influence with his mother, would, he knew, be inexorable upon that point.—Miſerable, therefore, were his proſpects. Engroſſed by theſe thoughts, he did not ſee Ethelinda 'till ſhe advanced pretty near to the window-ſeat on which he was ſitting.—He ſtarted up as ſhe approached, and taking her hand—"Oh! Miſs Claremont," ſaid he, "have I again found you? Why would you not honour me with a line, in anſwer to the letter I ſent you from Ireland?"

Ethelinda felt extreme agitation.—The confuſion ſhe was in, plainly evinced the various feelings and conflict in her mind.

"I certainly ſhould have performed the promiſe I made," ſaid ſhe, "had I ever received ſuch a letter—but I never did receive a letter from your Lordſhip."

"Not any letter!" exclaimed Lord Melworth.—"By Heaven! I wrote to you the moment I arrived, and a ſecond letter a very few days afterwards."

"I

"I received neither, I do assure you," said Ethelinda;—"but it is of no consequence, my Lord.—I am, however, glad of this opportunity of saying to you, that I think there are many reasons against my informing the Duchess with every circumstance of my life, and it is therefore my intention only slightly to mention to her my having been acquainted with your Lordship at Lady Cecilia's.—I dare say she will not ask me any particulars, and I shall not, uncalled upon, enter into them."

"But Miss Claremont," replied Lord Melworth, "suppose Mr. Corbet find you here; surely every thing is to be dreaded from his unprincipled conduct."

"I do not understand that there is any probability of his coming here," returned Ethelinda, "while I remain here, which will most probably be only a few months."

"Tell me," cried Lord Melworth, eagerly, "what then is your plan? Forgive my seeming impatience; for be assured, no one can be more anxious for your welfare—your happiness—

happineſs—than the unfortunate man before you."

Ethelinda coloured.—The idea of his *engagement* involuntarily checked even her grateful feelings.

"If you are unfortunate, my Lord, I ſincerely pity you; but ſometimes misfortunes are only the creation of one's own fancy;—and I own, were I to judge from what I have heard, ſuch I ſhould ſuppoſe your's."

Lord Melworth was juſt going to anſwer, when the Ducheſs entered the room.—He felt greatly mortified at this interruption, and, in a few minutes, ſaid, "as the evening is fine, he would take a little walk."

"Tell me which way you mean to go, my Lord," ſaid the Ducheſs, "and poſſibly we may not be long before we join you?"

He begged her Grace to direct his ſteps, as it was the ſame thing to him which way he went.

"Go,

"Go, then," returned the Ducheſs, "to the hermit's cell, and we will ſoon follow you.—I wiſh to take your opinion of ſome alterations I mean to make there, and particularly about a grotto."

"I will wait there 'till you arrive, Madam," replied Lord Melworth, as he went out of the room.

"Pray, my dear," ſaid the Ducheſs, looking full at Ethelinda while ſhe ſpoke, "were you not acquainted with Lord Melworth before you ſaw him here?"

"Yes, Madam, I was acquainted with his Lordſhip at Lady Cecilia Corbet's."

"At Lady Cecilia Corbet's!" repeated the Ducheſs;—"you know her too!—I wonder, my dear, you never mentioned thoſe circumſtances!"

Ethelinda, with ſome confuſion, replied, "I knew Lord Melworth as Lord Beaufort, and had never heard of the change in his title, and was ſurpriſed to find, in Lord Melworth, an acquaintance."

"Was you long with Lady Cecilia?"

"No,

"No, Madam, only a few months.—I went to her in conſequence of loſing a moſt valuable friend."

Here tears came into Ethelinda's eyes, which the Ducheſs perceiving, turned the diſcourſe, and propoſed going to the hermit's cell.

Ethelinda, happy to be relieved from the converſation, immediately went to prepare herſelf for their walk

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CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

All in the wrong—meaning to be very much in the right.

THE Duke had been ſtruck by the behaviour of Lord Melworth and Ethelinda full as forcibly as the Ducheſs, and had noticed it to her.

She now thought that Ethelinda had loſt ſome dear friend, and that the remembrance of paſt ſcenes was painful to her, and to that attributed what had paſſed; and ſhe impreſſed the Duke with the ſame opinion. He had himſelf, with an apparent careleſſneſs, aſked

aſked Lord Melworth if he had not been acquainted with Miſs Claremont before.—Lord Melworth ſlightly anſwered, that he had met her in the country, while on a viſit to Sir James Corbet.

Ethelinda reſolved that, if ſhe found herſelf unable to conquer her own feelings, or by her preſence, created uneaſineſs in Lord Melworth, ſhe would immediately quit this charming family, and again commit herſelf to the wide world

When Miſs Elford returned, ſhe depended upon an aſylum; and it occurred to her, that, in caſe ſhe found a neceſſity of ſuddenly leaving Melworth Caſtle, ſhe would pay a viſit to her old friend, Mrs. Fletcher; but, as the diſtance was great, ſhe thought it would be more eligible to wait 'till ſhe heard ſomething deciſive from Miſs Elford. She had ſolemnly promiſed that amiable friend to ſtay with her, upon her return from abroad, at leaſt a twelvemonth, in caſe it was in her power to do ſo;—but though that young lady

lady had declared her houſe ſhould, from that period, be conſidered as Ethelinda's home, yet the latter had not reſolved to adopt that plan entirely, feeling an invincible repugnance to become a burthen to any one. She reſolved, however, to accept Miſs Elford's proffered kindneſs in part, and to be decided in her future plans by future events;—and the poſſibility of finding herſelf allied to Miſs Elford, again, in ſome degree, ſoothed her mind.

She now determined to avoid having any private interviews with Lord Melworth;—"for what," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "can they avail:—They can only, circumſtanced as we are, increaſe, perhaps his, and certainly my own unhappineſs.—For is he not engaged? And indeed were he not, what hopes could I have, fate having placed us, in rank and fortune, ſo far diſtant from each other. Oh! my loſt parents!—poſſibly your Ethelinda's birth might equal his—yet it is preſumption to ſuppoſe it, and folly to think upon the fatal ſubject."

Many days paſt on without any particular occurrence;—but Lord Melworth became low ſpirited, and gloomy;—he wiſhed for an opportunity of ſeeing Ethelinda in private, but ſhe avoided giving him any;—nor, when he ſuffered himſelf to think cooly upon the ſubject, could he tell for what purpoſe he wiſhed for ſuch meetings;—meetings that could only tend to increaſe a paſſion almoſt bordering upon madneſs already, and which, with the eye of reaſon, he ſaw it was incumbent upon him to take every method to ſubdue.

Sometimes he thought of going away, but he had not reſolution to do it.—He would walk hours alone, and bathe her picture (which he had got from the painter at Langley Park) with his tears.—The little Belle was his conſtant companion; for, tho' he had pretended to reſtore it to Ethelinda, he always allured the little creature away, and could not bear the thoughts of parting with it.

When

When with Ethelinda, he would frequently gaze on her for a conſiderable time, 'till, recollecting himſelf, he would ſuddenly ſtart up, and walk to the window, or leave the room.

The Duke and Ducheſs, ſeparately and ſilently, obſerved his conduct.—The Ducheſs's partiality for Ethelinda, which was by this time affection, made her unwilling to ſpeak on the ſubject to the Duke, as ſhe well knew, if he imagined that Lord Melworth was likely to become attached to Ethelinda, he would make a point, at all events, of ſeparating them, and that the neceſſary conſequence muſt be her loſing Ethelinda, a circumſtance ſhe could not bear to think of.

The Duke's ſecret ſuſpicions had already brought ſuch an idea into his mind, and he was revolving how to bring it about without hurting the Ducheſs, whoſe increaſing attachment to her new favourite, he clearly perceived.

Things remained in this ſtate ſome time, when Ethelinda, a prey, in ſpite of all her endeavours, to the moſt ſevere uneaſineſs, was taken very ill.—The mind and body are ſo nearly connected, that one, cannot long ſuffer without the participation of the other.

Ethelinda tried, but tried in vain, to ſubdue the increaſing tenderneſs ſhe felt for Lord Melworth.—How, indeed, could it be in nature, that ſhe ſhould live under the ſame roof with him—Witneſs his amiable qualities, his ſuperior talents, his partiality to her, which, in ſpite of all his endeavours, was too evident.—How could ſhe ſee all theſe daily, and hourly, and not feel their ſtrong impreſſions—attached too as ſhe had, for ſome time, been to him.

The engagement, hinted at by the Ducheſs, ſeemed a riddle to her; for, if ſo engaged, why did he remain ſo long at Melworth Caſtle.—She concluded, as was the caſe, that it was an engagement ariſing from his family's wiſhes, more than from his own;—

and

and determined, if ſhe was an obſtacle to them, to remove herſelf out of the way :— But to tear herſelf from him, was an arduous taſk—and to give up the ſociety of the Ducheſs, whom ſhe revered, reſpected, and loved, was a cruel neceſſity—a neceſſity, however, ſhe determined to yield to.

She had ſuffered many ſevere conflicts and pangs before ſhe brought herſelf to this reſolution.—It was the force of them which, no doubt, had operated on her mind, ſo as to produce a violent head-ach, and every appearance of an approaching fever.

The Ducheſs inſiſted upon her going immediately to bed, and ſent for the beſt advice.

Lord Melworth had been taking a ſolitary walk, and when he returned, was told by the Ducheſs of Ethelinda's illneſs.

At that moment, her woman came in, to take ſome directions, which was the occaſion

of her not obſerving the effect her intelligence had upon Lord Melworth.—To prevent her obſerving it, he haſtened out of the room;—and his ſpirits being very much affected, he gave way to the moſt alarming apprehenſions, and was ſo agitated, as not to be able, for ſome time, to return to the Ducheſs.

The phyſician ſhe had ſent for ſoon arrived, and found Ethelinda, though very ill, by no means in a dangerous ſituation.

This afforded ſome conſolation to both the Ducheſs and Lord Melworth;—and the Duke appeared much intereſted in her welfare, though not ſo anxiouſly as the others.

The next day her fever increaſed, and ſhe continued, for ſeveral days, in rather an alarming ſtate.—At laſt the diſorder yielded to the judicious medical treatment of the phyſician, and the conſtant attentions that were paid her.

Poor

Poor Lord Melworth had been almoſt diſtracted while ſhe was at the worſt, and his behaviour had raiſed the moſt ſerious alarms in the mind of the Duke, who reſolved to get rid of Miſs Claremont as ſoon as poſſible. He mentioned it to the Ducheſs in the tendereſt manner, but in ſuch a way, as to let her ſee he was determined.—She well knew the firmneſs of his reſolutions, and he convinced her of the propriety of the meaſure. At the ſame time, ſaying, that it was as amply in her power, as he was certain it was in her inclination, to render every pecuniary aſſiſtance to Ethelinda that could be neceſſary for her comfort.

The Ducheſs, though feeling the ſevereſt repugnance at parting with her favourite, could not but admit the expediency of it, and promiſed, as ſoon as Ethelinda was ſufficiently recovered, to take the proper ſteps towards removing her.

At the ſame time, the Ducheſs not only felt ſeverely the thought of loſing her, but

was ſhocked at the apprehenſion that it would, however delicately ſhe brought it about, greatly hurt and diſtreſs Ethelinda, who, as ſhe had with real pleaſure obſerved, was become ſincerely attached to her.

CHAP. XII.

A warm argument, which, like moſt other arguments, fails to make a convert of either party;—and in which, if our Readers have any regard for our Hero and Heroine, they will be alarmed for both.

LORD MELWOLTH knew not a moment's peace.—Sometimes giving way to deſpair, he was driven almoſt to diſtraction.—At others, he would argue againſt the tyranny

tyranny of thoſe opinions that oppoſed his wiſhes, and reſolved not to ſacrifice every future proſpect of rational happineſs to miſtaken ideas, and the cold ſophiſtry of thoſe friends, who, biaſſed by their own rigid ſentiments, entered not into one of his feelings.

"Has nature," cried he, "given me exiſtence only to be the ſlave of their cruel pride and ambition? Surely, in yielding, I adopt the ſame errors.—Why elſe do I not aſſert my own right and power?—The various duties of life, all require our attention;—nor is any one of them to abſorb every other;—no one can feel more forcibly, than I do, the duty due to a parent;—but I never can perſuade myſelf, that in blind obedience to that, I am bound to ſacrifice every other tie, particularly when, in the eye of reaſon, they are irreconcileable.—Were I to marry that juſtly adored, and moſt excellent of women, ſhould I not earneſtly endeavour to render myſelf worthy of her, by aſpiring to excellence in every duty of life;—while, without her, life will be indifferent to me; and

wretchedneſs aſſociating with deſpair change every diſpoſition I may poſſeſs;——and thoſe vices, which I now abhor, may perhaps find ſhelter amidſt the anarchy of my mind.

"I will no longer heſitate;—it is wavering between phantoms and realities.—The former dazzle and deceive ſome of my friends;—the latter are ſubſtantial, and neceſſary to my happineſs.—I will talk to the Duke—if he poſſeſs reaſon—if he can be convinced—I ſhall convince him.—This determination carried him with a palpitating heart, and hurried ſteps to the Duke's library.—He was alone.

"May I," cried Lord Melworth, "intrude upon your Grace for a quarter of an hour?"

"I have never yet," replied the Duke, "conſidered your viſits in the light of an intruſion."

"Your Grace," returned Lord Melworth, "has always ſhewn me the greateſt kindneſs;—

neſs;—and Heaven grant (continued he) that it may be extended to me upon the preſent occaſion."

"I flatter myſelf," replied the Duke, "that there will never be any occaſion for my differing in opinion upon any eſſential point with Lord Melworth."

"I know not," ſaid Lord Melworth, "why I ſhould ſuppoſe we ſhall differ upon the ſubject I mean to enter upon, for I am no ſtranger to your Grace's powers of diſcriminating, and the goodneſs that uſually actuates your opinions.—I am well aſſured you would do every thing poſſible to prevent the miſery of others, and eſpecially to ſtop the tide of misfortune from overwhelming thoſe whom you love and eſteem."

"Forgive me," cried the Duke, riſing from his ſeat, and taking a chair nearer to Lord Melworth, "if I interrupt the chain of your diſcourſe.—Without troubling you to make uſe of more arguments, I clearly ſee where they will all point;—but as in healing a wound too quickly, there may be danger of hidden miſchief, far more fatal than the

wound itſelf;—ſo, by applying an ill-judged remedy to the miſeries of my friend, I may, inſtead of ſtopping, only turn the tide of misfortune into a more dangerous channel; and if, Melworth, I am not miſtaken, ſuch would be the tendency of yielding to your preſent arguments."

"Is there," ſaid Lord Melworth, "ſuch a thing as happineſs in life?"

"Comparative, without a doubt," replied the Duke;—"but it depends much more upon ourſelves than we are uſually willing to allow, and leſs upon the adventitious occurrences of life."

"But Duke, you will allow that a man, deprived of his eye-ſight, cannot ſee—of his hearing, cannot hear.—They are not fancied miſeries;—yet not leſs certain would be the miſery I ſhould endure, if ſeparated from the only perſon who poſſeſſes the power of making me happy."

"And why ſhould you ſuppoſe, Melworth, that only *one* perſon in the world has the power of making you happy?"

"Becauſe,

"Becauſe, my Lord, I am ſo much alive to the charms and perfections of that perſon, that I muſt be for ever dead to the powers of every other."

"Oh! Melworth," cried the Duke, "my ſuſpicions are, I ſee, well founded;—let my hopes be ſo likewiſe—that you will not ſacrifice your family's wiſhes—your own honour—your duty—your future ſelf-approbation, and every circumſtance that ſhould weigh with you to a tranſitory paſſion.—Rouſe, Melworth—methinks I hear your father's voice call to you from his ſacred tomb, and ſternly bid you not diſgrace a long line of illuſtrious anceſtors."

"Hold, my Lord!" exclaimed Lord Melworth;—"I cannot bear to have diſgrace united with the idea of a union with Miſs Claremont—a woman whoſe excellencies and virtues would add luſtre to a throne: Would it not be far more diſgraceful for me to ſuppreſs every honeſt feeling of my heart, and unite myſelf to a woman I can never love nor eſteem? Were I to be obedient to ſo tyrannical an injunction, and to make this

ſacrifice

ſacrifice of my peace to my family, they would, when too late, even condemn themſelves for my ſufferings;—while I, not deſerving pity, indeed, but an object of contempt and wretchedneſs, ſhould ſink, untimely, to that grave—from whence could my honoured father ſpeak—he would ſurely bid me riſe above thoſe prejudices, which, inſtead of ſaving me from ruin and miſery, muſt plunge me into the midſt of them."

The Duke was agitated, but with ſterneſs replied, "I have only to ſay, Lord Melworth, that, for my own part, I never can, never will conſent that the heir of my title, and I hope of my fortune, ſhould ſo unworthily degenerate from his noble anceſtors. But were I ſo weak as to yield my aſſent, would the mother, who has ſuch claims upon you, do otherwiſe than condemn me, and reprobate you?"

The Duke haſtily 'roſe, and quitted the room, before Lord Melworth had time to reply;—but the Duke's ſeverity had ſtruck him

him to the heart—to a heart where ſenſibility, with every other virtue, ſat enthroned.

Anxiety had already impaired his health; and this convulſive argument agitated him ſo much, as inſtantly to produce very alarming ſymptoms.—A violent rigor came on, which was ſucceeded by a fever, and this moſt amiable, this moſt reſpectable, and moſt excellent of men was, in twenty-four hours, in extreme danger.

The Duke's feelings were acute;—but had he ever ſo much repented of what he had ſaid, this was no time for explanation. Lord Melworth was delirious.—The Duke did not think it proper to tell the Ducheſs what had paſſed;—he hoped the illneſs was accidental, and leſs dangerous than was ſuppoſed;—and, for breaking through the attachment to which he was ſo much averſe, depended upon Lord Melworth's known duty to his mother.

Poor

Poor Ethelinda was yet ſo ill, that the Ducheſs did not let her know of Lord Melworth's ſituation.—She mentioned his not being well, but concealed from her the alarming ſtate he was in.

The continual mention he made of Miſs Claremont in his delirium, was ſufficient proof of his ſentiments towards her.—The Ducheſs would gladly have conſented to his wiſhes.—She even hinted it to the Duke, but he was inflexible, and warmly entreated her to conquer ſuch weak feelings, and never to urge the ſubject again.

Knowing his firmneſs upon ſuch occaſions, ſhe deſiſted, but felt extremely wretched at events, of which ſhe conſidered herſelf as, in ſome degree, the cauſe; yet, as it was impoſſible ſhe ſhould have foreſeen, ſo it was impoſſible ſhe could have guarded againſt them.

Lord Melworth continued many days very dangerouſly ill;—he called on Miſs Claremont

Claremont inceſſantly, implored his mother's conſent to his marriage, and ſeemed to argue, in great warmth, with the Duke.

The Ducheſs and Dermont were chiefly with him, and he made ſeveral attempts to get up, declaring he would die at Miſs Claremont's feet.—The Ducheſs, bathed in tears, frequently retired to her cloſet, from ſcenes that were ſo diſtreſſing—for ſhe could not gain conſolation from any quarter.

After a very ſevere conflict, youth and nature prevailed—Lord Melworth was reſtored to reaſon, but a moſt alarming weakneſs remained.—He had reſolved, previous to his converſation with the Duke, to let no obſtacles raiſed by his family, prevent an union, on which he ſaw not only his happineſs, but even his exiſtence depended; he had made up his mind to it's being, under every circumſtance, the wiſeſt meaſure he could adopt, and he endeavoured to find an opportunity of declaring his ſentiments to Miſs Claremont—

Claremont—but ſhe avoided him, and he dreaded her rigid ideas of propriety;—he hoped, however, in time to ſoften them:—He determined to write to his mother, and paint his ſituation and ſentiments in ſuch explicit terms to her, as ſhould excuſe an apparent breach of duty, in caſe ſhe perſiſted in refuſing her conſent;—a conſent, tho', which he felt would be neceſſary for the completion of his own happineſs, and probably not leſs ſo for the obtaining Miſs Claremont's acquieſcence in his wiſhes.

CHAP

CHAP. XIII.

Containing only a Lover's Letter.

LORD MELWORTH, as ſoon as he had, in ſome degree, recovered from the effects of his illneſs, reſolved to write to Ethelinda, but could not pleaſe himſelf in the attempt towards repreſenting his feelings and his ſituation.——After having deſtroyed ſeveral ſheets of paper, he at laſt wrote the following letter; but he greatly apprehended, that if he gave it to her, ſhe would refuſe reading it; and ſending it by a ſervant, might create a ſort of ſpeculation he wiſhed

wiſhed to avoid.—He determined, therefore, to watch an opportunity of putting it into her writing deſk, where he knew ſhe muſt find it.

LETTER.

" Miss Claremont—beloved Ethe-
" linda—though you cruelly avoid being
" alone with me for a moment—though you
" deny devoting a few minutes to my mi
" ſeries—ſtart not at my preſuming to ad-
" dreſs you in this manner—the only way
" left me, moſt beloved of women, to repre-
" ſent the diſtracted ſtate of my mind.

" Oh! could I find language deſcriptive
" of my feelings, ſurely you would not be
" inſenſible to it;—but yet I write not to
" upbraid;—though I am wretched, I will
" not be unjuſt;—and it would be unjuſt
" to upbraid you with the cruelty of my
" deſtiny, unleſs your future rigour ſeals it
" as your own act—unleſs you ſacrifice me
" to the unavailing ambition of my family.

" Beloved

" Beloved Ethelinda, I here ſwear no " power—not even *your's*, ſhall avail in " forcing me to comply with the wiſhes— " the proud views of my family.—Proud " wiſhes do I call them—the vain, the weak " wiſhes of my family;—for true pride " would cheriſh merits capable of adorning " it—but their views are of a degenerate " nature—founded upon error—upon falſe " deſpicable feelings;—their views are cal- " culated only to make me a wretch; what " power gives even a parent ſuch a right—a " right to diſpoſe of me, and deprive me of " every future proſpect of happineſs;— " forbid it, juſtice.

" Miſs Claremont—beloved Ethelinda— " ought I not—in this caſe am I not called " upon, to exert my independence.—Does " not every principle, that ought to be dear " and valuable to man, urge me to it?

" Oh! ſuffer not a falſe delicacy to lead " you into an error that will deſtroy me.— " To ſay I love you, is ſaying little—I only " exiſt for you—I only exiſt for you, moſt " adored of women:—Never can I love you

" leſs ;—vain would be ſuch an effort, were
" I capable of making it.

" Yet how am I certain, that, even with
" the conſent of my family, you would re-
" ceive my vows.—Pardon the preſumption
" I am guilty of, in flattering myſelf that
" you would—for ſurely I cannot be de-
" ceived in the ſympathy that has appeared
" to ſubſiſt between us.—Our ſentiments,
" our opinions are, I flatter myſelf, conge-
" nial.—If I have a place in your heart—
" if you could, under any circumſtances,
" look upon me with favour, I conjure you
" to attend to me now :—My ſufferings al-
" moſt give me a right to demand this of
" you, beloved and equally reſpected Ethe-
" linda ;—your refuſal would drive me to
" deſpair ;—let it not be—but give me an
" opportunity of explaining to you my in-
" tentions—my determinations—I conjure
" you to liſten to my prayer ;—nor let over
" rigid delicacy tempt you to a refuſal—I
" would not—no, I ſwear I would not aſk
" your conſent to what you ought to refuſe ;
" but I know, and tremble, at the dangers

" you

" you run.—To what diabolical ſchemes
" have you not already been nearly falling a
" ſacrifice ;—others may be formed, as hor-
" rid in deſign, and more certain in effect.—
" The proſpect is too ſhocking, and I ſtart
" back from it in diſmay.

" Oh ! Miſs Claremont—why are we to
" be ſeparated ? Do reaſon and juſtice de-
" mand the ſacrifice ?—no—they both for-
" bid it ;—nor can I ſubmit to an event
" which muſt bring every miſery with it—
" when, by reſiſting it, I ſhall be enabled to
" fulfil every moral duty, and become the
" moſt bleſſed, inſtead of the moſt wretched
" of mankind.

" Liſten to me, then—moſt beloved of
" women, and give me an opportunity of
" ſpeaking to you more fully upon a ſubject
" that engroſſes the every faculty of your
" devoted

" MELWORTH."

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Surprising events—diſaſtrous ones, with a great deal to hope, and ſomething to fear.

ETHELINDA, though ſhe got the better of her fever, did not recover her health and ſtrength; and being a continual prey to the uneaſineſs on her mind, ſhe ſeemed going rapidly into a decline.—She likewiſe found herſelf ſo miſerable, that ſhe reſolved to leave the Ducheſs immediately, on pretence of trying change of air.—She had been allowed, for ſome days paſt, to walk out as much as ſhe could bear without fatigue.

While

While ſhe was contemplating how ſhe ſhould proceed, ſhe ſauntered into the garden, and went into a PAVILION, which ſhe often viſited.—Throwing herſelf down upon a ſofa, after ſighing deeply, in the moſt touching tones, ſhe ſung the following ſong very charmingly, ſet by Young Meyers.—The words and muſic ſeemed to expreſs her feelings:

What energy can paint the grief,
Or what reſource can yield relief,
When reaſon bids us to conceal,
The tortures we are doom'd to feel:
And the forbidden ſigh ſuppreſs'd,
Returns upon the burthen'd breaſt,
Which bears, unpitied, and unknown,
The ſecret pangs it dares not own.
And oh! no future bliſs I trace,
E'en hope has veil'd her flatt'ring face,
She will not come to ſooth my care,
Dreading the blaſt of deep deſpair.

The laſt accents died away in utterance. She was quite overcome, and burſting into tears, exclaimed, "Oh! wretched—wretched Ethelinda."—At that moment, being

the firſt time of his going out, Lord Melworth entered.—He had juſt depoſited his letter.

Upon ſeeing her he ſtarted.—"Good Heaven!" exclaimed he;—"deareſt Miſs Claremont, what affects you in this manner? Do ſpeak—ſpeak to me, and relieve me from my cruel ſuſpenſe."

Ethelinda haſtily aroſe, and would have left him.

"No," cried he, "by Heaven! you ſhall not go 'till you have told me if it be in my power to render you any ſervice.—Command my life, my fortune—they are your's to diſpoſe of."

"Let me retire, my Lord, I conjure you; it was—it is (cried ſhe, heſitating) I believe becauſe my illneſs has weakened my ſpirits."

"Oh!—no—no," returned Lord Melworth, "that is not the reaſon;—you would not, on that account, have exclaimed, "wretched—wretched Ethelinda!"

"Oh! Miſs Claremont, what would I not give, that you thought me worthy of your confidence;—forgive me, moſt beloved—Yes, moſt beloved of women, if I preſume to ſay I have a right to your confidence—If the moſt unbounded affection towards you—if the moſt perfect reſpect—if the moſt arduous ſolicitude for your happineſs can give me any claim to it;—and (continued he, falling upon his knees, and ſcarcely able to articulate) no longer can I conceal the paſſion that preys on my life, that is undermining my exiſtence."

"Huſh!" cried Ethelinda, "name it not.—Were you even not pledged to another—I would not—muſt not liſten to you—but being pledged to another, my Lord, your profeſſions are an inſult—an inſult I have not deſerved."

"Pledged to another!" exclaimed Lord Melworth:—"To what other? To whom? No (continued he) my miſery, great as it is, does not riſe to that pitch."

"But," cried Ethelinda, at the ſame time feeling, though ſhe knew not whence it pro-

ceeded, a degree of relief, "whether it be ſo or not, my Lord, I never—never muſt again liſten to you upon this ſubject.—It is my determination to leave this place in a few days:—But, before I part from you for ever, I may, ſurely, without a crime own—yes, own (continued ſhe, trembling exceſſively as ſhe ſpoke) that—that your happineſs will ever be dear to me.—Honour compels me to act as I do, and not inſenſibility to your merits."

She inſtantly ruſhed out of the Pavilion, leaving Lord Melworth on his knees.—So great was his agitation and weakneſs, that he fell againſt the ſofa;—but hearing the Ducheſs's voice, who had met Ethelinda juſt as ſhe had got to the bottom of the ſteps, Lord Melworth, there being two doors, retired haſtily, without being ſeen.

"Bleſs me, Miſs Claremont!" exclaimed the Ducheſs, "what is the cauſe of the agitation you are in;—return with me (continued

tinued ſhe, taking her hand) into the Pavilion."

Ethelinda trembled ſo ſhe could hardly ſtand.

"Come," ſaid the Ducheſs, tenderly, "you muſt not—you will not, I am ſure, refuſe telling me what has occaſioned the hurry of ſpirits you are in."

Ethelinda could hardly ſupport herſelf, and ſcarcely ſpeak, and ſuffered the Ducheſs to lead her back again into the Pavilion, for ſhe had no power to make any reſiſtance, though the idea of Lord Melworth being found there at ſuch a time, and under ſuch circumſtances, added to her perturbation; and though, upon her entrance, ſhe inſtantly perceived he was gone, ſhe could not, in any degree, recover herſelf.

"Now, Miſs Claremont," cried the Ducheſs, "I truſt you will confide to me the reaſon of your preſent uneaſineſs; be aſſured you ſhall find a friend in me willing, if able, to aſſiſt you."

Ethelinda burſt into tears.

"I muſt leave you, Madam," exclaimed ſhe;—"on all accounts I muſt leave you—Severe as will be the affliction, I muſt rather ſubmit to it than injure the peace of thoſe to whom I am under ſuch obligations, and, Madam, I unfortunately ſee that I can no longer continue an inmate in your family, without eſſentially diſturbing the peace of it."

"My dear Miſs Claremont," replied the Ducheſs, "I ſuſpect the cauſe of your determination;—you are acting upon the nobleſt principles;—Melworth's attachment to you is conſpicuous;—it is to ſpare his feelings I muſt be deprived of your ſociety; is not that the caſe, my dear generous girl?"

"Oh! Madam," cried Ethelinda, "how good you are;—in what a delicate point of view you place my preſent misfortune—but do me the juſtice to believe, that I never have, for a moment, encouraged an idea that would derogate from Lord Melworth's ſituation, and the reſpect he owes and feels towards his family."

"Excellent

"Excellent young woman," replied the Ducheſs, "you know not how great a ſacrifice I ſhall make in conſenting to part with you.—Did it depend upon me, your merits would amply, in my opinion, compenſate for thoſe accidental advantages that fortune has denied you; but it does not depend upon me—for well I know, that were Melworth to unite himſelf to any one inferior in ſituation, however ſuperior their merits, his mother would never forgive him;—and I am ſorry to ſay, pride of anceſtry is the Duke's foible; and were Melworth to marry againſt their inclinations, it would not only embitter their lives, but he could never, having made them miſerable, be happy himſelf."

"Oh! do not believe I have ever encouraged the idea you allude to; yet I will own, for there is no diſgrace in being ſenſible to merit, that I am not, cannot be inſenſible to the ſuperior virtues and qualifications of Lord Melworth, and therefore it is the more neceſſary, as I owe ſomething to my own feelings, that I ſhould haſten from this place, much, as through your Grace's kindneſs, I

am attached to it.—But (continued Ethelinda) I have been the ſport of fortune from my birth;—a poor creature, rendered miſerable by an unhappy accident—in conſequence of which, I have been an outcaſt upon the world."

"Explain yourſelf, my dear girl," ſaid the Ducheſs;—"I have been long certain, tho' I never would ſuffer my curioſity to riſk the diſtreſſing you, that your preſent ſituation is far below what it ought to be."

"Oh! Madam," ſaid Ethelinda, "I never knew my parents;—I was committed, almoſt from my birth, to the care of a nurſe, who died ſome years after;—but a letter was intruſted to her, with a charge not to open it for four years."

"Indeed!" cried the Ducheſs.—"Pray what was the name of the nurſe?"

"Hoſkins, Madam," replied Ethelinda.

The Ducheſs turned pale, and ſeizing the hand of Ethelinda, exclaimed, though hardly able to articulate, "But did not ſhe, and a child committed to her care, die of the ſmall pox?"

"Yes,

"Yes, Madam," returned Ethelinda—"ſhe and a child belonging to a tradeſman in London, whom ſhe had taken a few months before, did die; but I, who had been with her for years, eſcaped, by being at that time with a Lady Falkner, whoſe memory I muſt ever love and venerate."

Ethelinda looked up, and ſaw the Ducheſs ſcarcely able to ſupport herſelf, with a deadly paleneſs over her features.—Imagining that ſhe was ill, Ethelinda haſtily aroſe, and took hold of her hand.

The Ducheſs, in ſome degree, recovered, and aſked her to whoſe care ſhe was committed, after the death of nurſe Hoſkins?

"To her ſiſter's, Madam, whoſe name was Jones, with the letter which was ordered by my mother, not to be opened unleſs ſhe were not heard of for four years;—but a fire, that deſtroyed every thing belonging to Mrs. Jones and her huſband, likewiſe deprived me of the happineſs of knowing to whom I belong; and as ſome fatal accident has cer-

tainly happened to my parents, I ſhall moſt probably never have the ſupreme delight of knowing them, and of receiving their bleſſing and protection."

Here poor Ethelinda was quite overcome, and burſt into an agony of tears.

"Forgive me, Madam," cried ſhe;—— "Oh! forgive my poor tortured heart."

"Have you," cried the Ducheſs with a faltering voice, "have you a red mark upon your right ſhoulder?"

"I have, Madam," ſaid Ethelinda, trembling at the queſtion."

"Enough," ſaid the Ducheſs, faintly— "thou art—my child,"—and ſhe ſunk, breathleſs, on the ſofa.

Surpriſe, joy, wonder, a conflict of various paſſions, produced ſuch an agitation in the weakened frame of Ethelinda, that ſhe likewiſe fainted away;—and in this ſtate they were found by one of the gardners, who was accidentally going to the Pavilion.—He flew

flew to the houſe for aſſiſtance, and ſoon returned.

The Ducheſs was entirely recovered, and endeavouring to ſupport Ethelinda.—The anxiety and tenderneſs ſhe expreſſed, 'till Ethelinda recovered, was exceſſive;—yet ſhe refrained, as much as ſhe could, from giving way to her tranſports, leſt ſhe ſhould too much affect the already diſturbed mind of her beloved daughter, who was, with difficulty, led home, and was ſoon after conveyed to her bed.

The Duke had rode out, as had Lord Melworth;—for, upon leaving Ethelinda, after ſitting near an hour in the garden, in deep meditation, he got upon his horſe, to be out of the way of the family, and wiſhing to reflect upon his ſituation, on the ſtrange reſolution Ethelinda had formed, and on the reception ſhe had given to the declaration of his attachment

He was revolving all this in his mind, and had given the reins to his horſe in a long lane, through which he was ſauntering, when he was rouzed from his reverie by a ſervant of the Duke's, who haſtily informed him that his maſter had been thrown from his horſe, and appeared to be conſiderably hurt.

Lord Melworth followed the directions of the ſervant, and ſoon reached the place where the Duke was, who, ſeemingly ſenſeleſs, had been conveyed into a ſmall farm-houſe.

The ſervant was on his way to the Caſtle, to inform the Ducheſs, when he accidentally met Lord Melworth, who immediately, upon his arrival at the farm, diſpatched a meſſenger for a ſurgeon, who was deemed ſkilful, and fortunately lived but little more than a mile from the farm.

The Ducheſs had determined to ſay nothing of the diſcovery ſhe had made, 'till the Duke's return, as ſhe thought it proper that he ſhould be the firſt perſon informed of it,

and

and ſhare the joy of imparting ſuch an event to the family.

She had therefore diſmiſſed her attendants, and was herſelf tenderly watching her new found child, who, from fainting, having been much weakened and exhauſted, had been laid on the bed, and quite worn out, had ſunk into a compoſed ſleep.

A ſervant had been diſpatched for a phyſician, and the Ducheſs was anxiouſly expecting his arrival.—The tears ſtreamed down her face, as ſhe ſurveyed her lovely child, and reflected on the hardſhips and perils ſhe muſt have endured.

Ethelinda, whoſe mind had been too much diſturbed and occupied, to permit her having a long ſleep, ſtarted, crying, "Oh! my mother—my dear beloved mother."

The Ducheſs, who was then on her knees, expreſſing her gratitude for the preſervation and reſtoration of her daughter, in a tranſ-

port

port exclaimed, "I am here, my child," and throwing her arms round her, preſſed her to her boſom.

Their mutual feelings were much too ſtrong to admit of deſcription, and indeed can only be imagined by thoſe who poſſeſs the moſt tender and ſympathizing hearts.

The Ducheſs told Ethelinda, that the Duke had been in extreme affliction at hearing of her death, of which they had no doubt; that having been obliged, by a variety of circumſtances, even after his family were reconciled to the marriage, to remain abroad, and to frequently change their ſituation, they had been ſome time without their uſual letters from the nurſe;—that ſhe, the Ducheſs, wrote ſeveral times, and had no anſwer;—and at laſt ſhe wrote to a friend in the neighbourhood, to make particular inquiries after Mrs. Hoſkins, and the anſwer ſhe received was a dreadful ſhock to them, and ſeemed to account for their not having heard as uſual.—It informed her, that

that Mrs. Hoſkins, and a child ſhe had to nurſe, both died of the ſmall-pox; but, not ſatisfied with this information, they wrote to another neighbour, who ſent the ſame account, which left them without any hope;—and they concluded, had the accounts they received not been true, that the ſiſter, Mrs. Jones, would have written to them, as ſhe was to have been intruſted with the ſecret, in caſe of any accident that made it neceſſary.—However, they wrote to the ſiſter, but had the letter returned, with an account of her having left the country, and that no one thereabouts knew any thing of her, which convinced them ſhe could not have had the care of their poor child.

The Ducheſs added, that the Duke's joy upon this event would be ſo extreme, that the greateſt caution would be neceſſary, in the method of imparting it to him, as he was very liable to a moſt dangerous complaint in his ſtomach, a kind of ſpaſm, upon any ſudden flurry.—The communication, therefore, of ſuch joyful tidings, muſt be left to her,

and

and ſhe charged Ethelinda not to betray them.

She had ſcarcely uttered theſe words when her woman came in, whoſe perturbed countenance ſhewed that ſomething was much amiſs.—The Ducheſs quickly aſked what was the matter? and was ſoon informed that the Duke had met with an accident.

Ethelinda ſtarted from the bed, from whence ſhe had not before riſen.—The Ducheſs, greatly agitated, deſired to hear the explanation.—The woman hoped it would not turn out very bad;—but his Grace had fallen from his horſe, and nobody knew exactly the conſequence.

"Oh! where—where is he?" exclaimed Ethelinda—Oh! Heaven ſave him—ſave my"—ſhe was juſt going to add—father—when recollecting the Ducheſs's prohibition, ſhe ſtopped ſhort.—A flood of tears came to the relief of the Ducheſs, and, by a kind of ſympathy,

ſympathy, drew forth Ethelinda's, in ſpite of the obſtruction which her agitation occaſioned.

The Ducheſs immediately ordered a carriage, but endeavoured to prevail upon Ethelinda to remain at the Caſtle.—No arguments however, could perſuade her to do ſo. She declared ſhe was well enough, and inſiſted upon going with her mother.—The Ducheſs was obliged to conſent, and they accordingly, in the utmoſt haſte, drove to the farm.

CHAP. XV.

In which ſome old acquaintance make their appearance again.

most of the Characters are so, only with new names

WHILE they were going, the Ducheſs ſummoned all her fortitude, and ſhe poſſeſſed a firmneſs of mind, reſulting from the ſuperiority of her underſtanding, which, upon trying occaſions, when it was neceſſary to call it forth, was uſeful to herſelf, and all about her.—She again charged Ethelinda, on no account, to divulge the ſecret, as this was not a time for ſuch a diſcovery; and indeed, 'till the Duke was quite recovered, which bleſſing ſhe would dare to hope for,

Ethelinda's

Ethelinda's ſituation muſt be kept from him, as the agitation the diſcovery would occaſion might be attended with the moſt fatal conſequences.—When they arrived at the farm, they found the ſurgeon had juſt ſet the Duke's ſhoulder, which had been diſlocated, and dreſſed a wound on his head. The ſurgeon aſſured the Ducheſs there was, at preſent, no unfavourable ſymptom; and if a fever did not come on, he hoped the Duke might be removed to the Caſtle in a few days.

Theſe aſſurances reſtored both the Ducheſs and Ethelinda to comfort; and the late happy diſcovery gave them unuſual, and in the mind of Lord Melworth, moſt unaccountable ſpirits.

Ethelinda had an additional cauſe of happineſs.—Lord Melworth might now love her without impropriety; and it was probable the Duke would be more pleaſed to receive him as a ſon than a couſin.

Lord

Lord Melworth, totally ignorant of the cauſe, wondered at the change in Ethelinda. She converſed with him with leſs reſtraint than ſhe had done ſince his arrival at the Caſtle; but ſhe ſtudiouſly avoided being alone with him.—The languor with which ſhe had been oppreſſed, ſeemed baniſhed—and the reſolution ſhe had made of leaving the Caſtle not only was unexecuted, but not talked of.

The Ducheſs too, ſeemed to idoliſe her, and to pay her ſuch unremitted attentions, as perfectly aſtoniſhed him; for though ſhe had appeared very partial to Ethelinda, and ever treated her with the utmoſt politeneſs, as well as kindneſs, ſhe had always kept up that ſort of diſtance that marked the ſuperiority of her ſituation.

But now that diſtance, all at once, ſeemed baniſhed, and the moſt affectionate anxiety had taken it's place, ſhe could ſcarcely bear Ethelinda out of her ſight, and ſeemed conſtantly watching her every look.—All this

was

was inexplicable to Lord Melworth, and he waited impatiently for it's ſolution.

Ethelinda's behaviour to himſelf was likewiſe equally unaccountable.—She muſt have found the letter he wrote;—yet, though ſhe ſtill avoided being alone with him, ſhe now treated him with evident marks of diſtinction and regard; took every opportunity of even ſhewing him kindneſs; and the Ducheſs was more marked than ever, in her attentions to him.

All this naturally tended to diſſipate his wretchedneſs, for the time, though, when he gave way to reflection, he could ſee no well-grounded hope to flatter himſelf that his future proſpects were brightened; yet, from ſome cauſe or another, he was much happier. Every thing ſeemed to wear ſo much pleaſanter an aſpect, that he could not help being lulled into at leaſt preſent tranquillity.

They were returned to the Caſtle, and the Duke recovering very faſt, when, the day after,

after, about two hours before dinner, a poſt-coach and four drove up to the Caſtle, from whence alighted, much ſooner than they were expected, Lady Cecilia and Miſs Corbet.—No one was in the drawing-room they were ſhewn into but Ethelinda, who could not help—for it was not human nature to do otherwiſe, at that moment feeling ſome degree of exultation.—Little did ſhe foreſee, ſhort ſighted creatures as we are, the misfortunes that ſtill hung over her.

Lady Cecilia abſolutely ſtarted at ſeeing her.—Miſs Corbet coloured.—Ethelinda made a grave courtſey.

"Bleſs me, Miſs Claremont! how came you here?" exclaimed Lady Cecilia.

"That, Madam, your Ladyſhip ſhall know another time," anſwered Ethelinda.—"At preſent, I ſhall inform the Ducheſs of your arrival."——She accordingly left the room.

Miſs

Miſs Corbet immediately ſaid to Lady Cecilia, "What in Heaven can have brought that creature here;—it is the moſt ſurpriſing thing that ever I knew in my life."

"It is ſo," replied Lady Cecilia;—"ſhe has, ſome how, by accident, got recommended here, I ſuppoſe—but I ſhall ſoon do for her."

"Indeed, mamma," cried Miſs Corbet, "I don't know that; for I do believe that Lord Melworth is ſtill attached to her.—I am ſure he was."

"Poh," cried Lady Cecilia; "it's impoſſible he can intend any thing that's ſerious: He may have an intrigue with her, perhaps; but I'll anſwer for it, he'll ſoon give up that."

"Well, I can't bear the ſight of her," replied Miſs Corbet; "and if ſhe ſtays here, I'm ſure I won't."

"Have patience," returned Lady Cecilia, and leave the management of that to me;—but we muſt know exactly what footing ſhe is upon."

The Ducheſs juſt then entered, and a great deal of civility, on the part of Lady Cecilia and her daughter, with very little ſincerity, diſplayed itſelf in their converſation.

The Ducheſs, though cool, was polite ;—it was not the time for returning Lady Cecilia thanks for the care ſhe had taken of Ethelinda.—On a future day, the Ducheſs meant ſhe ſhould be fully recompenſed.—The converſation turned upon various ſubjects.—Family matters were carefully avoided, as this was the firſt meeting ſince a reconciliation had taken place.

Among other things, Lady Cecilia aſked how long Miſs Claremont had been there, and if ſhe were an inmate of the Caſtle ?

The Ducheſs coolly replied, " that ſhe had been with her about three months.—She was once with your Ladyſhip for ſome time, I underſtand" (continued the Ducheſs) looking full at Lady Cecilia, who, though rather confuſed, anſwered in a pointed manner.

" Yes,

"Yes, yes, ſhe was with me for ſome time.—The Duke then entered, and it ſoon became neceſſary for the ladies to dreſs.

About a week paſſed on, while Ethelinda knew herſelf to be too much at home, in reality, to feel uncomfortable from the behaviour of the Corbets towards her, which, whenever they had an opportunity, in the abſence of the Ducheſs, was inſolent to a great degree.

Lady Cecilia found the Ducheſs's partiality to Ethelinda a great ſtumbling block in her way; but ſhe had better ſucceſs with the Duke, who, though much recovered, was ſtill far from well, and never went out alone.

One morning, when Lady Cecilia was walking with him in the garden, and the converſation taking the turn ſhe choſe to give it upon the ſubject of Ethelinda.

"I own," cried her Ladyſhip, "I am inclined—and yet—What? interrogated the

Duke.—"Why, I am inclined, becauſe I think I ought to reveal—ſome circumſtances, that, if your Grace and the Ducheſs were informed of—would perhaps—but yet the idea of prejudicing any body—is not pleaſant."

"Do you know any thing really amiſs of this girl, ſiſter?" interrogated the Duke.

"Why, to ſpeak the truth, brother, I do," replied Lady Cecilia.

But it will now be neceſſary for us to point out, that Lady Cecilia, by no means, intended to give, in any degree, a true illuſtration of our Heroine's ſtory, as ſhe thought it would tend to inquiries that might as well be avoided.——She therefore determined briefly to relate ſome circumſtances, that ſhe could colour in ſuch a manner as would tend ſufficiently to prejudice the Duke againſt her; and, that done, her point, ſhe thought, would be nearly carried.—Artful people, however, are very liable to loſe themſelves in labyrinths they form for others.—But, to return now to the converſation.

"I

"I muſt beg," cried the Duke, "that you will ſpeak out.—I have, indeed, reaſons for determining that Miſs Claremont is not altogether a proper perſon to remain as an inmate in my family, though ſhe certainly is a moſt bewitching young woman."

"Yes, yes," replied Lady Cecilia, "bewitching enough.—She aimed a little too high though, in my family; and had not my ſon had more firmneſs than moſt young men, he would have been her dupe;—failing in that, ſhe had, I believe, nearly been more ſucceſsful in her attempts upon Lord Melworth."

"Lord Melworth!" exclaimed the Duke.

"Yes, Lord Melworth," anſwered Lady Cecilia;—"and I own my aſtoniſhment was very great, indeed, at ſeeing her here—for it was imagined that——however, it may not be true;—but what will you think of her, after having met with a home at my houſe—been protected by me from almoſt want, and received every poſſible kindneſs.—What will you think of her eloping one

night—never writing to me, nor taking the leaſt notice of me ſince.—Lord Melworth, it is true, left us within a day or two afterwards;—and there was too much reaſon to ſuſpect—indeed I fear it is certain—but of that I wiſh to be ſilent."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed the Duke, "what a creature we have foſtered.—I muſt immediately inform the Ducheſs what ſort of a companion ſhe has got."

"That, I think," replied Lady Cecilia, "ſhould be done cautiouſly; for I ſee ſhe is a great favourite with her Grace."

"True," anſwered the Duke; "but the Ducheſs is only partial to real merit, not to the ſemblance of it.—She may lament the deception, but ſhe will abjure the deceiver."

"Very true, and very juſt, and what ſhe ought to do," replied Lady Cecilia; "but ſtill it may vex the Ducheſs, to know her character exactly; and if you get rid of her, there is no abſolute occaſion, juſt now, to explain every thing.—Mercy leads one to forbear."

"Well,"

"Well," replied the Duke, "we will conſider how far it is neceſſary to reveal to the Ducheſs the whole of her conduct.—I am obliged to go this evening ſome miles off, on particular buſineſs, which makes the Ducheſs uneaſy, as ſhe thinks I am not ſufficiently recovered to bear the fatigue.—I ſhall probably be detained 'till the day after to-morrow, and ſhall not have time, before I go, to conſider in what manner I ſhall acquaint her with what you have been ſo good as to tell me, and what are the proper and neceſſary ſteps to take, in conſequence of it; but as ſoon as I return, there ſhall be no time loſt in the buſineſs."

Lady Cecilia returned with the Duke into the houſe, with perfect ſatisfaction at the ſucceſs of her arts, which ſhe had no doubt would carry her through the buſineſs in ſuch a manner as ſhe wiſhed.

In the mean time, the Ducheſs was conſidering her plan of expoſing and puniſhing Lady Cecilia, and intended, on that day, to

have informed the Duke of the important diſcovery; but finding that he was obliged, unexpectedly, to go out upon buſineſs of conſiderable importance, ſhe reſolved to retain the ſecret within her own happy breaſt 'till he returned, which was to be at the end of two days at fartheſt.

Ethelinda had found the letter conveyed by Lord Melworth into her writing deſk.—She read it over and over and over, delighted with ſo ſtrong a proof of his affection.—She ſhewed it to the Ducheſs, who was equally pleaſed with it, and told her beloved daughter, that ſhe felt deeply for Lord Melworth's anxiety; it would not now, ſhe truſted, be of long continuance; but it was proper, on all accounts, that no eclairciſſement ſhould take place during the abſence of the Duke, or without his knowledge; that, as ſoon as he returned, every thing would be revealed; and, in the mean time, ſhe would have Ethelinda ſhew Lord Melworth as much kindneſs and attention as it was poſſible for her to do, under the preſent

ſent circumſtances; but that ſhe muſt poſitively avoid coming to any explanation.

Ethelinda determined ſtrictly to purſue her mother's advice.—Indeed, her conduct, latterly, had perplexed Lord Melworth to the greateſt degree—with the moſt cautious circumſpection, ſhe had continued to ſhun the being a moment alone with him, and yet received his particular attentions with the greateſt complacency, in which the Ducheſs likewiſe evidently joined; nor did even the preſence of Lady Cecilia and Miſs Corbet ſeem to check or throw any reſtraint upon Ethelinda, though they appeared wrapt in wonder.—Lord Melworth was himſelf perfectly at a loſs to account for all this, or to determine upon what ſtep he ſhould take, in order to find out Ethelinda's real ſentiments and intentions.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

If our Readers are fond of excurſions, perhaps they'll be pleaſed—at any rate, we hope intereſted.

THE Duke ſet out ſoon after dinner.—Miſs Corbet, having a ſlight cold, did not chuſe to venture out.—Lord Melworth took a ride to a farmer's, with whom he had ſome buſineſs, a few miles off.—Lady Cecilia retired to write letters, and Ethelinda ordered her harp to be carried to hermit's cell, where the Ducheſs promiſed ſoon to join her, and Lady Cecilia ſaid ſhe would follow them when ſhe had finiſhed her letters.

The Ducheſs made it rather longer than ſhe intended, before ſhe followed her darling daughter, from whoſe ſight ſhe could ſcarcely ever withdraw herſelf for half an hour together. She was looking for a miniature of herſelf, which had been painted many years before, and which ſhe meant to give Ethelinda.

When ſhe arrived at Hermit's cell, ſhe ſaw the harp thrown down, but Ethelinda was not there.—The Ducheſs concluded, that it had fallen by accident; ſhe picked it up, and examined it, fearing leſt it ſhould have been hurt, ſo as to prevent Ethelinda from playing.—She called on Ethelinda, imagining ſhe might be near; but not receiving any anſwer, ſat herſelf down, ſuppoſing that ſhe had rambled to ſome little diſtance, and would be back again preſently.

Above half an hour paſſed.—The Ducheſs rather wondered ſhe did not come, and took up a book, in which ſhe read for another half hour. She looked at her watch, and finding ſhe had been there above an hour, began

gan to grow a little uneaſy, but imagined Ethelinda might have walked back to the Caſtle for ſome muſic, and that they had, by ſome means, miſſed each other.—However, ſo much time had now elapſed, that ſhe reſolved to return to the Caſtle herſelf. Juſt as ſhe was going, Lady Cecilia appeared.

"Has your Ladyſhip ſeen Miſs Claremont?" interrogated the Ducheſs.

"No," anſwered Lady Cecilia;—"I thought ſhe had been here."

"I have been waiting for her an hour," ſaid the Ducheſs, and cannot think where ſhe is."

"Oh! very ſafe, I dare ſay; ſhe will moſt likely come here preſently."

"I don't know," anſwered the Ducheſs; "I am almoſt afraid ſhe is not well, and returned to the Caſtle.—I cannot be eaſy without going to ſee after her."

"Your Grace is very good to that young woman.—I wiſh ſhe may prove grateful for it."

"I have no doubt upon that point," anſwered the Ducheſs.

"I

"I am ſorry to ſay," returned Lady Cecilia, "that I know her a little better than your Grace does;—and it is only from regard to you, that I venture to give hints, that, properly taken, may prevent you from having a great deal of uneaſineſs."

The Ducheſs had the greateſt difficulty to ſuppreſs her feelings, but reſolved to do ſo upon this occaſion, as ſhe thought it highly proper that the Duke ſhould be the firſt perſon acquainted with the diſcovery of his child, and conſulted upon the proper ſteps to take in conſequence of it.—She therefore only made Lady Cecilia a ſlight anſwer, but in ſuch a manner as let her ſee it was a ſubject ſhe did not chuſe to enter upon; they then ſet out for the Caſtle, where they ſoon arrived, and the Ducheſs went in ſearch of Ethelinda, who could no where be found.

She now began to be ſerioufly alarmed, and ſent ſervants different ways to find her.—They returned without a ſucceſs.

Others

Others were diſpatched; and ſhe ran about herſelf from place to place, and into every room in the Caſtle, where there could be a poſſibility of finding her.—The name of my Ethelinda, by which ſhe had latterly always called her, when they were alone together, reſounded in vain through all the apartments. The flower-garden, the Pavilion, were ſearched in vain.—In vain did almoſt every ſervant fly from place to place, in obedience to the Ducheſs's commands.—Not being able to hear any thing of her, ſhe at laſt became almoſt diſtracted.

Lady Cecilia and Miſs Corbet were aſtoniſhed at the violence of her uneaſineſs, and ſaid to themſelves that it was juſt like madneſs.

It was now near nine o'clock, and the Ducheſs was walking, in great agitation, up and down a terrace cloſe to the Caſtle, from whence ſhe could ſee a great way round, when ſhe perceived Lord Melworth at ſome diſtance, riding gently towards her.—She haſtened

tened to meet him, and almoſt, before he was within hearing, called to know if he had ſeen Miſs Claremont.—He replied in the negative.

"Oh! Heavens!" exclaimed the Ducheſs, "where can ſhe be! ſome accident muſt have happened to her!"

Lord Melworth immediately jumped off his horſe, and, upon hearing the Ducheſs's account, ſeemed ready to ſink in the earth. He, however, ſucceſsfully exerted himſelf, and ſaid he would himſelf go in purſuit of her directly.

"But which way, Lord Melworth—which way will you go?" exclaimed the Ducheſs.

As ſhe was ſpeaking, one of the ſervants came running to them, quite out of breath. It was ſome moments before he could ſpeak, but the Ducheſs eagerly cried, "Have you heard of her:—For Heaven's ſake, ſpeak."

"My

"My Lady Ducheſs," cried the ſervant, "I was inquiring at the Crown in the village, and a labourer ſaid he was working in a lane not far from hermit's cell, and he ſaw a poſt-chaiſe and four go as hard by him as poſſible; the blinds were up, but ſome one in the inſide ſeemed ſtruggling to let one down—and he heard a ſcream;—he run ſome way after the chaiſe—but two ſervants, who were riding as hard as they could after it, ſaid they would ſhoot him, if he went any farther—and he was all alone, and could do nothing; but he does believe there was ſome foul play."

"Oh! it was her;—it was my Ethelinda," cried the Ducheſs, claſping her hands together, and burſting into an agony of tears. "She is loſt—ſhe is loſt—and what will become of me?"

Lord Melworth was in too great an agitation himſelf to make any obſervation upon the violent grief of the Ducheſs.

"I

"I will inſtantly go after her," ſaid he, "and will not return 'till I bring you at leaſt ſome tidings of her."

"Oh!" cried the Ducheſs, "do not loſe a moment's time; my life depends upon her ſafety.—Oh! you know not how dear ſhe is to me.—Fly, my Lord, and Heaven proſper you.—Some of my ſervants ſhall attend you; but leſt you ſhould be unſucceſsful, I will ſend other people different ways."

Lord Melworth ſent a ſervant, to make what inquiries he could, relative to the poſt-chaiſe that had been ſeen, which road it went, &c. and as ſoon as another horſe, which he preferred for expedition, was got ready, he ſet off, with two ſervants, in purſuit of our poor Heroine—whom, if our readers feel as much for as we do, they will not be ſorry to follow—and will be obliged to our inſtinctive knowledge for giving them ſome inſight into the preſent extraordinary adventure.

END OF VOL. III.